



DAILY RETURNS SYSTEM (DRS) VERSION 3.3 RELEASE NOTES

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Introduction

This new version of DRS introduces a large number of user-experience and productivity improvements. DRS, being a web-based application, has traditionally, like most typical web-applications been mouse-driven rather than keyboard-driven.


The part of DRS where users spend the most time is undoubtedly the daily return input screen, which is very input-intensive. As anyone knows, input-intensive tasks are much quicker and efficient through operating from the keyboard rather than the mouse.

DRS used to lack keyboard shortcuts so far, which resulted in a lot of mouse/keyboard switching, which was tedious and time-consuming for the end-users registering a large volume of daily returns on a daily basis on the system.


The keyboard shortcuts added in this version aim to considerably enhance the ease and comfort of use of DRS, while enhancing the productivity.

Users can now login on Enter keyboard key press

After launching DRS, users have to authenticate to gain access to the DRS screens they are eligible to, which is done by entering an user name and password.


On most public websites, pressing the return key after having filled in your credentials allows you to do get authenticated on the website. In DRS, it required so far to click the  button every time, which required to grab the mouse.

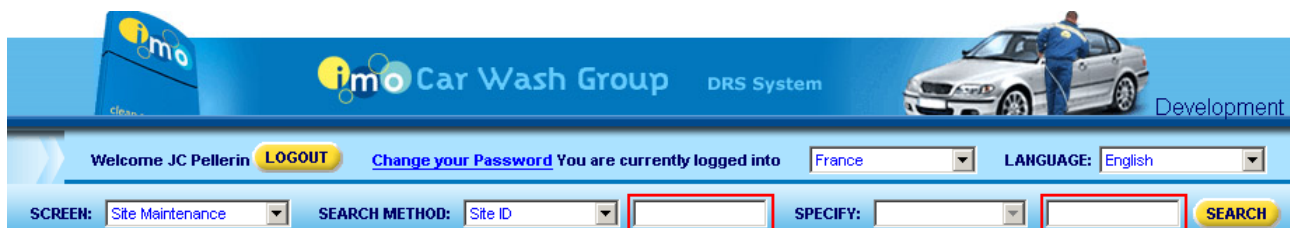
DRS now accepts the Return key while being on either the username or password field, to login.


Pressing the  button obviously remains valid, for users preferring this approach.

Search can now be launched on Enter keyboard key press

Similarly, the same thing has been implemented on the Searching facilities of DRS, from the toolbar at the top of the DRS screen.

So far, it was not possible to initiate the search after having filled in the criterions and hitting the Enter keyboard key. Clicking the  button using the mouse was required.



From now on, pressing Enter, while on the search criterions text fields (highlighted in red in the picture), will automatically trigger the search, without needing to click the  button.

The first end meter text box is now focused by default

In the previous versions of DRS, when getting to the daily return input screen, the focus was not set to any text box control and the user had to manually put the focus on a text box using the mouse to start editing the

daily return.

Starting from this new version, the first ending meter text box is now focused by default, and its *caret* (the flickering position indicator: |) is now positioned after the last digit of the meter, as the last digits of the meters need to be updated far more than the first digits.

Daily Return This text box is now always selected on entering the Daily Return Input Page

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Meter Programs	Qty	Price	Comm	Total	
P1 - Program 1	149	€3.50	€114.73	€521.50	Edit
P2 - Program 2	0	€5.90	€0.00	€0.00	Edit
P3 - Program 3	2	€7.00	€3.08	€14.00	Edit
P4 - Program 4	0	€8.60	€0.00	€0.00	Edit
P5 - Program 5	0	€9.90	€0.00	€0.00	Edit
PV - Vacuum	0	€1.00	€0.00	€0.00	Edit

Totals	Qty	Receipt	Comm	Amount Due
	152	€536.00	€117.92	€536.00
Amount Banked			€0.00	
Credit Amount			€0.00	
Under/Over			-€536.00	

Return ID 1017115 Period Post
Invoice Credit No
Adj No Voucher No
Created by JC.Pellerin on 31/03/2011 at 11:58

Daily Returns To Do (10) Site List

Sites to do (0) Site List

Quick Data Entry

Meter Programs	Previous Meter Reading	o/r	Start Number	End Number	Zero
P1 - Program 1	D:20.03/11 S:186730 E:186730	>	186731	186679	<input type="checkbox"/>
P2 - Program 2	D:20.03/11 S:72780 E:72780	>	72780	72780	<input type="checkbox"/>
P3 - Program 3	D:20.03/11 S:5206 E:5206	>	5207	5208	<input type="checkbox"/>
P4 - Program 4	D:20.03/11 S:0 E:0	>	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
P5 - Program 5	D:20.03/11 S:34804 E:34804	>	34804	34804	<input type="checkbox"/>
PV - Vacuum	D:20.03/11 S:84307 E:84309	>	84309	84309	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air	D:20.03/11 S:4 E:4	>	5	5	<input type="checkbox"/>

Update Cancel

Add Meters Voucher Test Actions Submit Zero Day Delete

Notes

Keyboard-based navigation through meter text boxes

In the previous versions of DRS, users could not use the keyboard to switch from a meter text box to another to change their values. It required them to use the mouse to bring the mouse cursor over the text box of the meter they wanted to edit and click to get into that text box and start editing.

This was particularly time-consuming as it was stopping the input flow, having constantly to switch from the keyboard (to input numbers) and to the mouse (to select the next meter).

Starting from this new version, a press of the Enter key, while on a meter text box will set the focus to the next one and set the caret after the last digit of the meter. The Up and Down arrows keys from the keyboard can also be used. The Up Arrow key will bring the focus to the preceding meter text box, while the Down Arrow key will bring it to the next meter text box (same as the Enter key). This results in a very *Excel-like* navigation user-experience.

Quick increment and decrement of meter values

Sometimes, meter increments just by a few units, in which case it can be tedious to have to delete the last figure of the meter to put the new one instead.

This new version introduces a quick way to increment or decrement meter values. By simply clicking the + or - keys from the keyboard numeric pad, the meter value the user is currently on will automatically increment or decrement by one. These keys may also remain pressed to quickly increment or decrement by several units.

Quick toggling of the Zero checkbox


On the DRS daily returns input page, users have to check the Zero checkbox where there has not been any sales for that meter.

Clicking the checkbox required a click of the mouse on the checkbox next to the end meter text box, which required, once more, to grab the mouse to click it.

Starting from this version, it is now possible to hit the Z keyboard key, while on either any start or end meter textbox. This will then toggle the Zero checkbox associated with these meters, without requiring any mouse-based operation.

Quick start meter overriding

On the DRS Daily Returns input screen, the start meters text boxes are disabled and greyed out by default. This is because the start meters should normally be based on the previous day's ending meters or supplied by the modem for the modem-sites. It is however sometimes required to override them if a meter has changed after a maintenance operation or if the modem miscounted them and a few other cases.

Before this version, it was required to click this narrow button , which was reportedly hard to accurately click.

From now on, the start meter can also be enabled by hitting the O (*for Override*) keyboard key while on the ending meter text box.

Upon pressing that keyboard key, the start meter textbox will become enabled, and the focus will automatically be moved to the last digit of the start meter textbox for quick input.

The  button is still obviously effective, but the keyboard shortcut is faster.

Keyboard shortcuts associated to the Daily Return Input screen's buttons

The Daily Returns input main screen contains several buttons, each triggering a particular action. In the versions of DRS thus far, the only way to trigger the actions associated with them was to click these buttons.

Starting from this new version, a set of global keyboard shortcuts has been associated with the buttons, enabling users to trigger their actions from anywhere on the page by using the associated keyboard shortcut. Below is a list of the keyboard shortcuts mapped to each of the buttons.

They all tend to start by CTRL+SHIFT, followed by the first letter of the associated button, as an easy way to remember them.

Update : CTRL+SHIFT+U: Saves the daily return to the database in a non-locked state, and performs validation checks on the filled values and reports the validation errors so the user can correct his input.

Meters : CTRL+SHIFT+M: Allows the user to add a meter to the daily return that is not listed on it yet.

Voucher : CTRL+SHIFT+V: Allows the user to affect vouchers to a meter program.

Test : CTRL+SHIFT+T: Allows the user to affect authorised tests (free washes) to a meter program.

Submit : CTRL+SHIFT+S: Submits the daily returns and lock it. The daily return becomes eligible for banking and exporting to the Dynamics SL accounting software (for SL-enabled countries).

Zero Day : CTRL+SHIFT+Z: Used when the site has been closed / no sales occurred on that day.

Delete : CTRL+SHIFT+DELETE: Deletes the daily return, so it can be recreated anew.

All : CTRL+SHIFT+A: Activates the “All Meters” tab and sets the focus to the first ending meter.

Amount Banked : CTRL+SHIFT+B: Activates the “Amount Banked” tab and set the focus on the “Amount banked” text box.

Down Time : CTRL+SHIFT+D : Activates the “Down Time” tab and sets the focus on the “Down Time” text box.

Keyboard shortcuts cheat sheet

Below is a cheat sheet that users may want to print if required and keep nearby until they are familiar with these keyboard shortcuts and have taken the habit to using them.

The screenshot displays the software interface with several keyboard shortcuts highlighted by arrows:

- CTRL+SHIFT+A**: Points to the 'All' tab in the top navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+B**: Points to the 'Amount Banked' tab in the top navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+D**: Points to the 'Down Time' tab in the top navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+U**: Points to the 'Update' button in the 'Quick Data Entry' section.
- CTRL+SHIFT+V**: Points to the 'Voucher' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+T**: Points to the 'Test' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+S**: Points to the 'Submit' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+Z**: Points to the 'Zero Day' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+DEL**: Points to the 'Delete' button in the bottom navigation bar.
- CTRL+SHIFT+N**: Points to the 'Site List' button in the bottom left corner.

The 'Quick Data Entry' table is as follows:

Meter Programs	Previous Meter Reading	o/r	Start Number	End Number	Zero
P1 - Program 1	D:11/03/11 S:185623 E:185747	>	185748	185930	<input type="checkbox"/>
P2 - Program 2	D:11/03/11 S:72420 E:72462	>	72463	72539	<input type="checkbox"/>
P3 - Program 3	D:11/03/11 S:5192 E:5192	>	5195	5198	<input type="checkbox"/>
P4 - Program 4	D:11/03/11 S:687 E:687	>	0	0	<input type="checkbox"/>
P5 - Program 5	D:11/03/11 S:34560 E:34587	>	34588	34632	<input type="checkbox"/>
PV - Vacuum	D:11/03/11 S:83864 E:83913	>	83914	83995	<input type="checkbox"/>
Air	D:11/03/11 S:87224 E:87224	>	2	2	<input type="checkbox"/>

Quick new “Go To Next Day” feature and keyboard shortcut

(No Button) : CTRL+SHIFT+N : (N for Next) : This is an entirely new feature that enable users to quickly go to the next daily return for the same site, most likely after having completed the entry of a daily return, and wanting to process the next.

Before, the quickest way to achieve that was to open the “Daily Returns To Do” panel, which, after being clicked, opened a list of the next daily returns to fill in.

While handy, opening this panel required a mouse click, waiting for the panel to finish opening, and then hovering over the link for the next day and clicking it.


Going to the next daily return can now just be reduced to using the CTRL+SHIFT+N keyboard shortcut, which should take at most 1/10th of the time required by the previous approach.

Please note that this shortcut will not update the daily return that the user is currently editing. The reason for this is to ensure the user has seen and fixed any validation error before leaving the page. This feature should thus only be used after a successful update or submission of the daily return.

Operator Statement updating frequency improvements


The way the Operator Statement was working since the first version of DRS has been improved to avoid the risk of printing Operator Statements missing the very latest changes done by users on DRS.

So far, the Operator Statements were updated nightly, using a scheduled update routine running at midnight every night. This means that the Operator Statements were not refreshed until midnight, and that changes made during the day by users, would only actually get reflected on the operator statement the following morning.

It was obviously possible to immediately refresh the statements either for a single or all operators by clicking a  button present on the Operators screen, without having to wait for the midnight job to have executed, but this was a manual action.

While presumably documented and explained when DRS was first released several years ago, it was admittedly an easy to forget step and thus error-prone.

The new version improves the way this works by automatically updating the operator statements for the previous and current month, upon entering the Operator Statement report, so that they are always up to date when they are printed.

The  button can still be clicked without having any adverse effect but this should not be required anymore.

Ending words

I strongly encourage users to try out these new keyboard-driven navigation features and make the most out of it.

Keyboard shortcuts can save a tremendous time: even if the time savings for each action are small, a daily return input user performs the same actions often hundred of times a day. These small time savings add up and can save a considerable amount on time while making the job less frustrating.

DRS would undoubtedly benefit from shortcuts in other screens as well and more are definitely planned.

Unfortunately, adding shortcuts to web-applications is a quite consuming exercise. These were by far the most beneficial ones, and adding more will be an incremental process over the future versions.

Please do not hesitate to return feedback about these new features so that we can know whether it is worth continuing implementing them or not.

Any question or concern, please do not hesitate to contact me.