

February 2, 2009

Attention Ocean Importers

Customs and Border Protection has begun implementation of the Importer Security Filing and Additional Carrier Requirements (ISF) in accordance with the terms of the Safe Port Act, with full participation and compliance required by January 26, 2010. At this time we would like to inform you of the requirements, and offer our assistance.

The rule requires importers or their agents to submit an Importer Security Filing with Customs and Border Protection no later than 24 hours before the cargo is laden aboard a vessel destined for the United States.

There are ten data elements included in the ISF:

- Seller name and address
- Buyer name and address
- Importer of record number
- Consignee number
- Manufacturer (or supplier) name and address
- Ship to party name and address
- Country of origin
- Commodity Harmonized Tariff Schedule of the United States (HTSUS) number
- Container stuffing location; and
- Consolidator name and address.

The bill of lading number, or the housebill number for breakbulk shipments, also must be provided in the ISF. Customs has provided some flexibility in the filing, but their objective is to have all the data prior to the lading.

We are able to submit the ISF as your agent, but you must make the necessary arrangements with your suppliers to provide us with the information within the required time frames as outlined in the CBP regulations. Shipments will not be permitted to load on the exporting vessel until the ISF is filed with Customs and Border Protection.

There are Customs surety bond considerations and penalty provisions to consider, but your entry bond will provide coverage for the ISF, and penalties are not a major focus during the implementation phase. There are several articles on the ISF on the Customs and Border Protection website, cbp.gov/trade.

Please feel free to call us to discuss the implementation of your ISF program.