



Australian Customs Cargo Advice

Number 2012/11

Changes to manual clearances of shipper/importer owned empty containers and related accessories/equipment

Overview

As part of its business improvement activities, the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection) is progressively centralising its administration of securities and carnets to the National Temporary Imports and Securities (NTIS) section in Brisbane.

ACCAs 2012/01, 2012/02 and 2012/09 detailed key business changes in February this year regarding Customs and Border Protection's administration of securities and carnets, which included:

- Implementing a risk based approach to the administration of the securities function for the future;
- Introducing a monitoring/compliance based future operating model for lower risk securities; and,
- Moving all securities and some carnets business progressively to the centralised NTIS section.

Empty container clearance changes

It is important to note that the changes outlined below do not affect the clearance of shipping company owned containers, which will continue to be reported and cleared on Cargo List Reports.

Australian owned containers imported initially or those that are subsequently re-imported, will continue to be cleared via an import declaration (FID).

For foreign owned containers that are temporarily imported Customs and Border Protection will continue to manage the clearance of those empty shipping containers (including 'tank-tainers') and container accessories/equipment pursuant to the International Customs Convention on Containers. These empty containers are cleared as temporary imports under Section 162A of the Customs Act 1901. The clearance process of these empty shipping containers also applies to container equipment, such as liners for the inside of shipping containers for bulk agricultural products.

Industry has generally cleared these containers by presenting the relevant commercial documentation at a Customs and Border Protection Client Services counter (or via email), and in some regions processed by securities staff. However, with the centralisation of securities management to the NTIS this is progressively not a viable business option.

Customs brokers or owners of these containers have options to clear these containers in the following ways:

1. By lodging an import declaration (FID) for the empty container(s) via the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) quoting treatment code 354 which is keyed to Section 162A temporary import clearances. Using the new ICS risk based approach to clearing temporary imports (as outlined in ACCA's 2012/01 and 2012/02) a security identifier is unlikely to be required. Therefore, clearance can be obtained immediately in most cases. In addition, there is no ICS recovery cost for FIDs that quote treatment code 354.
2. From Monday 27 August 2012, manual clearances are still an option for industry by lodging documentary **Import Declarations (B650)** and relevant commercial documentation at a Client Services counter. However, these clearances will be processed by **close of business next working day** in accord with the service standard for such. Customs and Border Protection's 'Client Service Charter and Standards' booklet can be accessed via the following link:
<http://www.customs.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/ClientServiceCharterDL-WEB.pdf> .

Contact for Further Information

For general inquiries about the clearance procedures contact Cargo Support by email via cargosupport@customs.gov.au .

For policy related information contact Import/Export Policy by email via importexportpolicy@customs.gov.au .

Australian Customs and Border Protection Service
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