



# QUICK GUIDE TO IMPORTS

## SEA CARGO TERMINAL OPERATORS (CTO)

Sea CTOs are responsible for loading and unloading cargo from a vessel. Their principal role in dealing with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection) is to report details of cargo discharged from a vessel and to ensure the release or movement of this cargo is in accordance with Customs and Border Protection requirements. CTOs may also request to move cargo off the wharf to meet various operating requirements.

It is important that CTOs familiarise themselves with the processes and their obligations to communicate and receive information about cargo to Customs and Border Protection.

Customs and Border Protection legislation specifies that all cargo discharged from a vessel must be electronically outturned according to legislated timeframes and moved only with appropriate authority. That authority may be in the form of a Cargo Status Advice or Underbond Approval message transmitted from the Integrated Cargo System (ICS).

### REPORTING OPTIONS

There are several options available to CTOs to communicate cargo information to the ICS. These are as follows:

- report via a third party provider
- report via a bureau
- report via the online ICS Customs Interactive facility
- report via electronic messaging using in house software or a commercially available package.

### REGISTRATION

CTOs contracted to load or unload international cargo from a vessel must have an Establishment ID. This can be obtained by completing an *Application for an Establishment Identifier*. The Establishment ID must be quoted on Arrival Reports in order to get a Cargo Status message.

If a CTO chooses to report via a bureau or third party provider, they will generally take care of any administrative requirements. It should be noted that clients using a bureau or third party provider are still legally responsible for the data reported in the ICS.

Clients can communicate directly with Customs and Border Protection using a digital certificate/s and must register in the ICS prior to submitting any electronic reports. Clients who choose to report via the Customs Interactive facility should be aware that this facility best suits low volume reporters.

Comprehensive supporting documentation is available to clients who wish to develop their own reporting software.

### PROGRESSIVE DISCHARGE REPORT (PDR)

CTOs report all containers discharged from an international vessel via the PDR. The PDR includes dates and times of discharge, container numbers and the party responsible for the container. CTOs must also report containers that are discharged and subsequently restowed. Containers reported on the PDR are reconciled against reported cargo and unreported containers are considered high risk to Customs and Border Protection. The PDR is used to acquit underbond by sea movements between CTOs.

### SEA OUTTURN REPORT (VESSEL)

CTOs report all NON containerised cargo (Bulk and Break Bulk) discharged from an international vessel via the Sea Outturn Report. Details contained in the report include dates and times of discharge, cargo identification and type, the party responsible for the cargo and the outturn result.

## SEA OUTTURN REPORT (UNDERBOND)

On occasions, such as cargo being repositioned for transshipment, CTOs will receive cargo that has moved to their establishment by means other than a vessel. This type of cargo is outturned using the Sea Outturn (Underbond) message.

## UNDERBOND MOVEMENTS

In addition to reporting cargo, CTOs may need to move cargo to another location away from the wharf. These moves are reported in the ICS electronically via an Underbond Movement Request. On these occasions the CTO needs to distinguish between their role as a CTO or the Responsible (requesting) Party. Requirements for underbond movements are mandated by legislation.

## RELEASING CARGO

It is the responsibility of the CTO to ensure that cargo leaving their establishment has been released only after authority from Customs and Border Protection has been received. That authority may be in the form of a Cargo Status Advice or Underbond Approval message transmitted from the ICS. The ICS transmits up to date cargo status information to all release establishments

## CUSTOMS INTERACTIVE (CI) FACILITY

The ICS offers a comprehensive search and diagnostic facility where CTOs can lodge, view and amend their reports. Cargo status information is available on the Customs Interactive facility which may be used by low volume operators as a contingency in case of systems outages.

## COMPLIANCE

Customs and Border Protection's Compliance Assurance Branch monitors the timeliness and accuracy of Outturn Reports to ensure compliance with the legislated reporting requirements. CTOs should familiarise themselves with the requirements relevant to their operations as they vary depending on the cargo type and nature of the message.

The Compliance Assurance Branch undertakes regular checks to ensure that cargo has been released and outturned in accordance with Customs and Border Protection requirements. These checks involve scrutiny of the CTO's records or the physical inspection of cargo. All supporting documents must be retained and available for inspection for at least five years.

Regional Compliance officers are available to help clients to comply with Customs and Border Protection requirements. Compliance officers are also on hand to undertake onsite visits and provide a range of educational and other helpful material.

Penalties apply where instances of non-compliance with Customs and Border Protection requirements are detected.

