



QUICK GUIDE TO IMPORTS

SHIPPING COMPANIES

Shipping companies operate the vessels that transport goods into Australia. They carry overseas cargo on behalf of Freight Forwarders and owners of the cargo and often lease space on the vessel to other shipping companies. They own the containers in which the goods are shipped. Shipping companies are often represented by a shipping agent (who may represent a number of shipping lines which operate in the region). Their principal role in dealing with the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection) is to report vessel arrival information, information about the cargo and request permission to move that cargo within Australia while it is still under Customs control.

Shipping companies intending to operate within Australia should familiarise themselves with the processes and their obligations to communicate information about cargo to Customs and Border Protection.

Customs and Border Protection legislation specifies that all overseas vessels and imported cargo must be electronically reported into the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) in a timely and accurate manner. This is to allow Customs and Border Protection to complete a risk assessment before the cargo arrives in Australia. Additionally, if uncleared cargo needs to be moved within Australia, it must be done so in accordance with Customs and Border Protection legislation.

REPORTING OPTIONS

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

- 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

If a shipping company chooses to report via a bureau, the bureau will generally take care of any administrative requirements. It should be noted that clients using a bureau 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 registering 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 choose to develop their own reporting software.

CARGO REPORTS

Cargo Reports provide details of the cargo, its journey and entities involved. Cargo Reports link to other ICS messages and are critical to the process of assessing risk and clearing cargo. The risk assessment process takes time and some cases require further investigation which could impact on the delivery of the cargo. Both Customs and Border Protection and Biosecurity Service Group (Australian Quarantine Inspection Service) are responsible for the risk management of all imported cargo and the interception of high risk and prohibited items.

CARGO LIST REPORT

The Cargo List Report is used to report certain types of cargo and containers that would not normally be required to be reported on a Cargo Report. The Cargo List Report shows details of empty containers, cabotage cargo and cargo being repositioned for export. The Cargo List is critical in identifying the cargo on the vessel not reported on a Cargo Report and its risk is assessed by Customs and Border Protection.

IMPENDING AND ACTUAL ARRIVAL REPORTS

Impending Arrival Reports provide details of the vessel's journey including overseas and Australian ports of call, estimated times of arrival at Australian ports and discharge information. Impending Arrival Reports link to other ICS messages and are critical to the process of risk assessment, clearance and determining the location of the cargo to send status information. Impending Arrival Report information is available via the Customs Interactive facility to all users. The Actual Arrival Report provides detailed information on where and when the vessel arrived at a particular port within Australia. Actual Arrival Reports are used to identify the exact berth the vessel is moored and to calculate the timeliness of cargo reports.

UNDERBOND MOVEMENTS

In addition to reporting vessel arrivals and cargo, shipping companies may also be responsible for moving cargo from the place of discharge to another location for deconsolidation, delivery or to satisfy Customs and Border Protection requirements. These moves are reported in the ICS electronically via an Underbond Movement Request. Requirements for underbond movements are mandated by legislation.

CUSTOMS INTERACTIVE (CI) FACILITY

The ICS offers a comprehensive search and diagnostic facility where users can view and amend their reports. Details about the status of cargo are available to monitor its progress towards release. Vessel arrival information is available for all clients. Shipping companies may also utilise the Customs Interactive facility as a contingency plan or back up in case of outages.

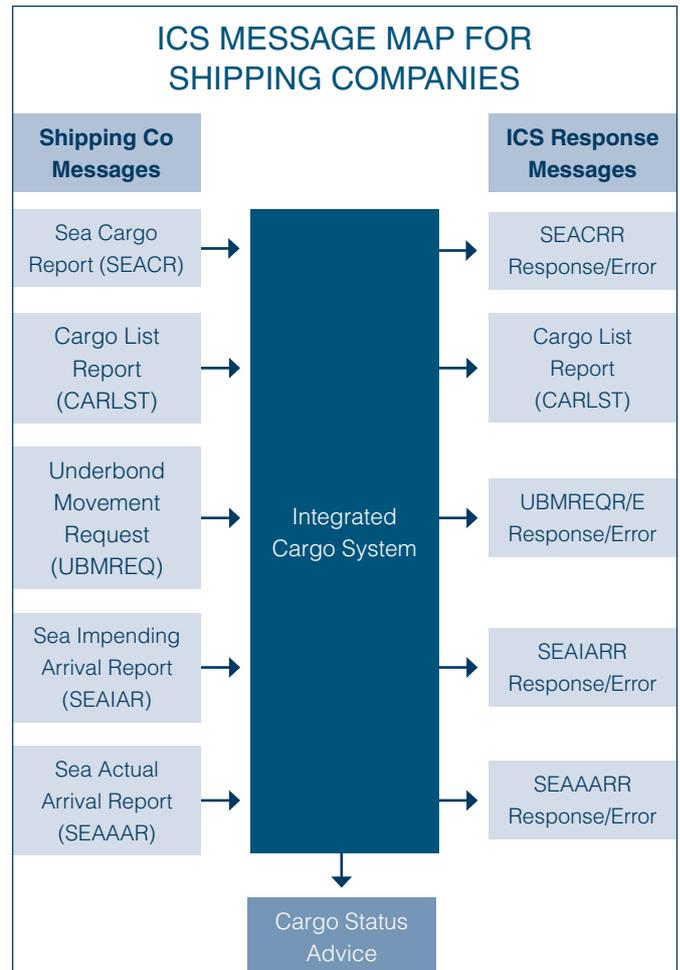
COMPLIANCE

Customs and Border Protection's Compliance Assurance Branch monitors the timeliness and accuracy of Cargo Reports and arrival information to ensure compliance with the legislated reporting timeframes. Shipping companies should familiarise themselves with the requirements relevant to their operations as they may vary according to a range of factors.

The Compliance Assurance Branch undertakes regular checks to ensure accuracy of Cargo and Arrival Reports. 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.



BASIC STEPS TO CLEARING CARGO

Voyage details reported and risk assessed in ICS

Cargo reported and risk assessed in ICS

Underbond Movement Requests lodged

Customs broker declares goods and pays charges

Declaration risk assessed in ICS

Cargo arrives then discharged, outturned and moved to depot to be unpacked and outturned

Consignments released and delivered to owner