

BRIEFINGS

C-TPAT

On April 16, Customs formally launched its new initiative against terrorism, Customs-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT). It is a joint initiative between the U.S. Government and business designed to protect the security of cargo entering the United States while improving the flow of trade. Importers that are accepted into C-TPAT can expect expedited processing of their goods. More than 100 companies have signed up as participants. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.

CUSTOMS BONDS

Customs published instructions regarding continuous bonds that were destroyed in the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks. Any party that filed a bond application with Customs in either of the two New York ports, 1001 or 7200, on or before September 11, 2001, must either provide Customs with a copy of the approved bond, or apply for a new bond. 67 Fed. Reg. [32082](#) (May 13, 2002)

EXPORTS

- On April 18th the Bureau of Export Administration (BXA) was renamed the Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS).
- BIS has reported that it has received an increased number of reports of requests of U.S. companies to engage in activities that support the Arab boycott against Israel. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.

TPA

Trade Promotion Authority (TPA) has moved forward in the Senate after a recent compromise was agreed to by Senator Daschle, the President and certain Senate Republicans regarding the provisions of the Trade Adjustment Assistance (TAA) component. The compromise added significant new worker benefits. The Senate is expected to debate and vote on the bill this week. The House approved TPA legislation late in 2001. A Conference Committee is expected to work out the differences between the Senate and the House.

ICMP/ISA

Customs announced the termination of the Importer Compliance Monitoring Program (ICMP.) A new self compliance program tied to the C-TPAT security initiative, called Importer Self Assessment Program (ISA), is expected to be announced soon with the Commissioner's strong support. Participants can expect greater benefits. 67 Fed. Reg. [21322](#) (April 30, 2002).

"08" AGREEMENT

An "08" Agreement to include FTZ manufactured product shipped to Canada/Mexico on the "06" entry instead of an "08" entry has been signed. It cannot be used until the special "ZD" code is programmed into the AES system. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.

STEEL

- Subsequent to Proclamation 7529, the Administration has issued notices of two sets of annual TRQs for additional steel products. Importers may file post-entry claims to receive in-quota treatment retroactive to March 20. CEBA [Q020425A.TXT](#) and [Q020425B](#) (May 1, 2002).
- A significant number of exclusion requests have been submitted by U.S. industry. USTR has established procedures for the further consideration of previously submitted requests for exclusion of products from the steel duty and TRQ actions. Requests for further consideration should be made by May 20. 67 Fed. Reg. [19307](#) (April 18, 2002).
- The EC issued a proposed list of U.S. products that would be the subject of additional duties of up to 100% in retaliation to U.S. steel duty increases. The list includes politically sensitive articles. Access "[What's New](#)" for a list of HTS numbers that are contained in the proposal.

COAC MEMBERSHIP

Treasury has issued a Notice announcing its intent to renew the Treasury Advisory Committee on Commercial Operations of Customs (COAC) charter for another two year period and requesting applications for membership on COAC. Interested parties must submit their information by June 17. 67 Fed. Reg. [20577](#) (April 25, 2002).

ACE

- Testing for the first stage of the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) is to begin on or after October 28, 2002. Importers interested in participating in the first stage of ACE must submit applications by June 1, 2002. 67 Fed. Reg. [21800](#) (May 1, 2002).
- An interim audit report recommending improvements in the management of Customs' Automated Commercial Environment development regarding communications, staffing, and scheduling issues, has been posted to the Treasury Department's Office of Inspector General's (OIG) web site. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.

WOOD PACKAGING

The USDA's Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) has posted to its web site the recently published *International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures: Guidelines for Regulating Wood Packaging Material*. This publication advises what kind of solid wood packaging may need treatment to exterminate pests, the kind of treatments that are approved, and how to mark packaging that has been treated. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.

ORR RULINGS

In an effort to reduce future backlogs of pending Rulings, we understand that Customs Headquarters has instituted strict standards for acceptance of Ruling Requests.

HMF REFUNDS

Customs published its final rule regarding the procedure for obtaining refunds of HMF paid on exports. This procedure does not change the Dec. 31 deadline for exporters to have filed refund requests for all of their past HMF payments. 67 Fed. Reg. [31948](#) (May 13, 2002).

MAQUILADORA

In 2001, maquiladoras were stripped of many of the tax and tariff exemptions that they enjoyed for years. The peso has appreciated 25% against the dollar in the last three years. A total of 350 maquila plants have closed since the beginning of 2001, affecting 240,000 Mexicans, or nearly one-fifth of the maquila industry's workforce. International companies are shifting operations from Mexico to China, Vietnam, and Guatemala, due to lower labor rates and the recent changes in Mexican law. *Business Week* (April 29, 2002).

CUSTOMS BORDER HOURS

Customs has published the hours of operation for both U.S. and Mexican Customs for the ports of entry along the Southwest border. Listed are the U.S. border crossings and hours of operation for both passengers and cargo. www.customs.gov/impexpo/border/crossings_1.xls.

DUTY SUSPENSION BILL

The House Ways and Means Subcommittee on Trade has requested public comment by June 7, 2002 on almost 500 miscellaneous duty suspension and technical corrections bills. It is expected that the miscellaneous trade package will be introduced in the House of Representatives this summer. Merchandise submitted that creates revenue losses, operates retroactively or attracts significant controversy or opposition may not be included in the final miscellaneous trade package.

ANTI-DUMPING

There were 348 anti-dumping investigations in 2001 compared with 251 investigations in 2000. Twenty-four countries opened investigations into 139 different products. The United States led all other countries in these investigations. *Financial Times* (April 26, 2002).

FTA

- President Bush announced on April 23rd his intention to negotiate a free-trade agreement with Morocco. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.
- The U.S. and a group of eight West African countries signed a Trade and Investment Framework Agreement (TIFA) on April 24th. The African countries involved are part of the West African Economic Monetary Union (WAEMU). Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.
- The EU and Chile on April 26, 2002 reached a bilateral trade agreement. Access "[What's New](#)" on our website.

CANADIAN CUSTOMS

Canada Customs and Revenue Agency has delayed full implementation of a new penalty system for import violations until October 7, instead of April 1, as originally planned. Under the new penalty program Canadian importers that commit violations would be liable for civil penalties ranging from \$100 to \$25,000. *American Shipper* (May 2002).

FTZBD ANNUAL REPORT

- The Foreign-Trade Zones Board has issued its revised guidelines for annual reports to be submitted to the Foreign-Trade Zones Board. The report format can be accessed online at <http://www.ia.ita.doc.gov/ftzpage>
- The FTZBD has created a page on its website providing FTZ information specific to oil refinery subzones. The address is ia.ita.doc.gov/ftzpage/oil.html.

FOREIGN-TRADE ZONES BOARD ACTIVITY AS OF 5/15/02		
	APPROVED	PENDING
ZONES	246	3
SUBZONES	476	11
MISCELLANEOUS		40
AVERAGE PROCESSING TIME (MONTHS)		
ZONES	11	
SUBZONES	10	