Australian Customs Notice 1996 09

**PREPARATION OF SUBMANIFESTS FOR EXPORT CARGO CONSOLIDATIONS POSTPONEMENT OF COMMENCEMENT DATE**

Australian Customs Notice (ACN) 95/64 dated 9 November 1995 advised industry that Section 117A of the Customs Act had been amended to make it a **mandatory** requirement that persons involved in the consolidation of cargo for exportation by ship or aircraft prepare and communicate a submanifest in respect of those goods to Customs.

The amendment became effective on 1 July 1995, however, a period of grace was provided to give affected parties a reasonable time to adjust. It was announced in ACN 95/64 that the new submanifest requirements would be implemented on 1 March 1996.

The ACN advised freight forwarders, slot charterers and consolidators that they would satisfy the new reporting requirements for export cargo consolidations by **either** lodging a manual submanifest with Clearing areas or via electronic means (ie. the EXport InTegration (EXIT) system). Cut-off times were also nominated for acceptance of manifests for processing by Customs.

Over the past two months, the Australian Customs Service (ACS) has received a number of representations on this matter from the freight forwarding and courier industries in particular. Essentially, industry has highlighted its desire to comply with the new requirements through electronic reporting via the EXIT system. Some industry members have expressed concern at their ability to effectively comply via a manual system due to transport industry and other export requirements.

The ACS has also been advised that a number of EXIT software suppliers have been unable to develop, test and provide software to enable industry users to respond to this initiative by 1 March 1996. Therefore, in acknowledging industry's concerns and to further assist compliance with the new reporting requirements, it has been decided to postpone implementation **until 1 May 1996**. This decision has been taken on the basis that there will be a substantial uptake of the EXIT system by 1 May 1996 by industry members to enable electronic reporting.

It should be noted that this initiative is essentially aimed at consolidators who deal with carriers and principal agents. Therefore, for the purposes of the legislation, **a person, other than a carrier, with 2 or more consignments, who prepares a Master Air Waybill or Courier Baggage Voucher or holds an Ocean Bill of Lading, must prepare and communicate to Customs a submanifest for those goods.** To facilitate early reporting any other consolidator of export cargo **may** also prepare and communicate a submanifest to Customs for their own export consolidations.

# The ACS is pleased to note that a large number of companies involved in export cargo consolidation throughout Australia are in the process of adjusting their procedures in anticipation of a 1 March commencement. Those companies are encouraged to commence reporting export cargo consolidations in accordance with the new arrangements as soon as they are in a position to do so.

**If any assistance is required, please contact the Exports section in your region or Assistant Director EXIT Canberra on the phone numbers listed below.**

# FURTHER INFORMATION

The ACS wishes to offer every assistance to companies that may be affected by these new procedures. Enquiries should be referred to regional Exports sections on the following numbers:

NSW 02 2132430 WA 09 4301317

VIC 03 92448483 NT 089 469851

SA 08 479310 TAS 002 301231

QLD 07 38353320

Regional seminars relating to the changes will continue as scheduled. Details can be obtained from Exports sections.

Enquiries regarding the EXIT system should be referred to Warren Benson, Assistant Director, EXIT, Canberra on 06 2756558. Enquiries regarding this ACN should be referred to Peter Kable, Assistant Director, Export Policy, Canberra on 06 2756569.

L B WOODWARD

Chief Executive Officer CANBERRA

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