

Customs Clearance International, Inc.
ISF –Importer Security Filing

Technical Questions Specifically for Household goods shipments

- 1) Is an ISF filing required for household goods shipments of USA & Foreign military, government and diplomatic personnel?
Answer: YES
- 2) Is the ISF filing required for Air Shipments?
Answer: No, only for shipments arriving via ocean freight into any of the 50 States, District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.
- 3) Is the ISF filing required for shipments arriving from Guam, US Virgin Islands and other insular possessions into the 50 States, DC or Puerto Rico?
Answer; Yes, these insular possessions are considered outside the territory of Customs and require an ISF to be filed.
- 4) When and how must the ISF be filed?
Answer: The regulation requires the ISF data to be filed electronically via one of two systems, ABI (automated broker interface) used by U.S. Customs Brokers or via AMS (automated Manifest System) normally used by steamship lines/NVOCC's. At this time no steamship line is filing the ISF on behalf of importers. The ISF should be filed 48 hours PRIOR to the departure of the vessel from the last foreign port prior to departure for the USA.
- 5) What is the difference between a Customs Broker filing and a NVOCC or SS line?
Answer; A customs broker is required by regulation to keep all information confidential. A SS line or NVOCC is not bound by any regulation to keep the information confidential.
- 6) Who is responsible and what happens if I fail to file an ISF?
Answer; The importer/owner of the goods is responsible to file the ISF. The SS line is not responsible to verify prior to loading that an ISF has been filed. Customs has several remedies for failure to comply with the regulations that include refusal to allow the shipment to be offloaded and/or penalties of up to \$5000 per shipment for failure to comply. The ISF requirement has been law since Jan. 26, 2009 and penalty enforcement begins with shipments arriving on or after January 26, 2010. No extension of a start date is anticipated at this time.
- 7) What happens if my shipment misses a vessel or the details of the shipment change?
Answer; In the event the vessel name, bill of lading number, consignee name or other details change you must notify Customs Clearance International to file an update of information in the ABI system. If this information is not updated Customs will not be able to match the original filing resulting in a violation and possible penalty action. Updates are required to be filed up and until the vessel arrives at the destination port in the USA.

- 8) Can the ISF filer/broker be a different company that clears customs?
Answer: Yes, the filer/broker who files the ISF does not need to be the same company that clears customs at the port of entry. Most origin agents will find it easy to work with one filer/form for the ISF filing for the entire USA.
- 9) Are ISF's required to be filed for both military code 3 & 4 shipments?
Answer: Yes, no exclusions at this time for any household shipments.
- 10) What if I have my personal use vehicle in the shipment, do I need to file this?
Answer: Yes, it would still be filed under the household goods/personal effects type 03, but the automobile's or motorcycle's actual harmonized tariff must be used (autos under 8703, motorcycles under 8711).
- 11) I have items less than 1 year that are subject to duty, but for personal use only, do I need to file for these items?
Answer: Yes, it would still be filed under the household goods/personal effects type 03, but each item's actual harmonized tariff must be used.

Questions on completing the ISF form

Customs Clearance Int. has created and condensed the ISF form to be in compliance with the regulations for the required data elements for HHG shipments. It should be noted that this form cannot be used for general cargo shipments as many additional details are required to be in compliance. If you have a commercial shipment please contact our office or consult our website for the ISF form used for commercial, commodities shipments.

- 1) What if my shipper is not a US Citizen and has no social security number?
Answer; Customs allows the use of a passport number, country of issue and date of birth in lieu of a social security number.
- 2) Where do I get the bill of lading number?
Answer; this is a very important part of the ISF filing. The number that you must include on the form is the LOWEST number that is being transmitted to Customs via the AMS system. If you are not booking the freight directly with the ocean carrier and using a NVOCC then you MUST inquire if the NVOCC is transmitting their house bill of lading number to AMS or if the shipment is being co-loaded with another NVOCC then you must obtain the bill number that is being transmitted via AMS and report that number to Customs Clearance Int. on the ISF form. If Customs cannot link the bill of lading number provided on the ISF it is just like not filing the ISF and the shipment is subject to penalty. As of January 2009 steamship lines are providing the bill of lading number at the time of booking. You should ensure if you are using an NVOCC that they are providing you the AMS bill number they will transmit at the time of booking.

3) What are the different ISF filing codes?

Answer; Customs has the following codes related to Personal Effects and Household goods: Type 3 is for Military and Commercial PE/HHG, Type 5 is for FOREIGN Diplomats only. The attached form is for Type 3 ISF filings only, if you have a commodity shipment, carnet or other non-hhg/pe shipment contact our office or consult our website for the proper form to be completed.

4) Is the full name required?

Answer; Yes the FIRST, MIDDLE and LAST name is mandatory as of Dec 18, 2010.

5) Is the date of birth required?

Answer; Yes the date of birth is mandatory as of Dec 18, 2010.

6) What if the shipment contains a car or motorcycle?

Answer; If the shipment contains a car or motorcycle, check the box and circle appropriate vehicle.