

## **CUSTOMS DIRECTIVE**

**ORIGINATING OFFICE:** FO:TP:S

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### **SUBJECT: CENSUS INTERFACE-PROCESSING PROCEDURES**

**1 PURPOSE.** To issue policy and to provide operational guidelines for the Census Interface Program.

**2 POLICY.** The U.S. Customs Service has been mandated to collect and disseminate statistical data on imports for use by the Bureau of the Census, Department of Commerce. The procedural guidelines used in the implementation of the Census Interface Program, which are stated in this directive, will provide uniformity essential to the successful and timely processing of census warnings.

**3 AUTHORITY.** Section 484(f) of the Tariff Act makes the collection and publication of import data the joint responsibility of the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of the Commerce, and the Chairman of the U.S. International Trade Commission.

#### **4 RESPONSIBILITIES.**

**4.1** The Assistant Commissioner, Office of Field Operations, is responsible for the overall management of the Trade Statistics Program.

**4.2** The Port Directors, who manage the day to day operations of the ports, are responsible for implementing and executing national policy in a uniform manner.

**4.3** It is the responsibility of the Director, Field Operations, Port Directors, Assistant Port Directors, Trade Operations and Outbound Operations to ensure compliance with the provisions of this Directive.

#### **5 BACKGROUND.**

**5.1** The Trade Statistics Program continues to be a priority area for Customs. The Census Interface Program, a part of the Automated Commercial System (ACS), is one of the means used to collect data for the import trade statistics compiled by the Bureau of the Census. Under this program, the data from Automated Broker Interface (ABI) entry summaries is subjected to the edits and validations established by Census through the analysis of import statistics. When the data falls outside the parameters

assigned to each tariff classification, a Census warning is generated. It is necessary to examine the questioned information for validity and to make corrections if required. Note: The presence of a warning does not necessarily mean the data is incorrect.

**5.2** Filers, Entry Unit personnel and import specialists handling an ABI entry summary are responsible for ensuring that all Census warning conditions have been resolved. This will help ensure that the information transmitted to Census is correct and timely, with the minimum amount of handling and reverification as we progress with electronic processing.

## **6 ACTION.**

### **6.1 FILER PROCEDURES**

**6.1.1** The filer preparing an ABI entry summary has the initial responsibility for ensuring that the statistical data is correct. It is essential that the ABI status indicator (ABI/N or ABI/S) appear in the entry type block (block 2) of the CF 7501 Entry Summary Form. Upon transmittal of the entry summary data, Census warnings for improbable conditions will be received via ABI. These messages will be prefixed by \*Census\* and will display one or more of the warning statements (see Attachment A numbers 1-10 for the most common warning messages). The filer will review the questioned data and if corrections are made, the filer will retransmit the entry summary data through ABI prior to presentation of the CF 7501 package to Customs. A statistical copy of the CF 7501 is not to be submitted. NOTE: The entire entry summary must be retransmitted through the ABI system. It is not sufficient to change the incorrect information by making pen and ink changes on the CF 7501 only. ABI policy mandates that the document submitted must match the electronic submission.

**6.1.2** If all the information appears to be correct as originally transmitted, the filer must attach a note indicating the nature of the Census warning and explaining why the data, as shown, is correct and submit the entry summary. It is essential that U.S. Customs knows there is a warning message on the entry summary that the filer has determined to be correct.

**6.1.3** When a nonstatement ABI entry summary is returned to the filer by Customs because of a Census warning, the data is to be reviewed. If corrections are made, the filer must retransmit the entry summary through ABI as well as make changes on the CF 7501. Again, if everything seems to be correct, the entry summary is to be resubmitted with an attached, written explanation of why the data is correct.

**6.1.4** If a statement entry summary is returned to the filer by Customs, the filer will make any necessary corrections in pen and ink on the CF 7501 and resubmit it. Customs will make the corrections in the system.

### **6.2 CUSTOMS ENTRY PROCEDURES**

**6.2.1** When a nonstatement entry summary is presented, regardless of any indication that the filer was unable to resolve an error warning, the collection should be accepted.

If the system indicates a Census warning condition, the summary must be forwarded for entry summary input to identify the specific warning message, placement in Customs reject status and forwarded to the import specialist. Entry summaries with Census warnings are not to be bypassed. Typographical errors or other such obvious mistakes should be corrected immediately by entry staff, otherwise, the entry summary, in reject status, will be referred to the import specialist team (or the designated reviewer in locations without import specialists) for action. Under no circumstances will entry staff override a Census warning without specific instructions from the import specialist or designated reviewer. These procedures will be followed even when the same entry summary is rejected multiple times.

**6.2.2** Statement summaries with Census warnings will be identified on the statement with a "C". A separate Census Entry Summary Report will be generated for each entry summary containing Census errors.

**6.2.3** This report identifying the specific warning message, together with the entry summary, will be forwarded to the import specialist for action.

### **6.3 IMPORT SPECIALIST PROCEDURES**

**6.3.1** Entry summaries with Census warnings must be reviewed for correctness of data. Import specialists will be examining more data fields than they did under the manual verification system. Among the information now covered are gross weight, ratio of quantities to weights, improbable air shipment weight, etc. (see Attachment A pages 1-10 for a list of the most common warning messages and explanations). The actual parameters established for each tariff number can be viewed in ACS (see Attachment B).

**6.3.2** The import specialist will then pursue one of three options:

#### **6.3.2.1 Rejection back to filer for correction**

**6.3.2.1.1** A nonstatement entry summary may be returned to the filer who will make any necessary corrections. A statement entry summary may also be returned, but the filer will only be able to make pen and ink changes to the CF 7501. Customs will have to make the changes in the system.

#### **6.3.2.2 Correction by Customs**

**6.3.2.2.1** Under this option, the import specialist will make any necessary corrections on the CF 7501 Entry Summary Form. Then the entry summary will be accessed in ACS, the line item viewed and the necessary changes made. These changes must be made in the system within 2 days of receipt of the entry summary by the import specialist (see Attachment B). When there are multiple warning messages on a line

item, some to be corrected and some to be overridden, all corrections should be made before the override is processed.

### **6.3.2.3 Override**

**6.3.2.3.1** Under this option, when the import specialist determines that the data is correct and that the entry summary should be accepted as presented, the warning condition will be overridden in ACS.

**6.3.2.3.2** Overrides must be completed within 2 days of receipt of the entry summary by the import specialist (see Attachment B).

**6.3.2.3.3** The override option must be used with great discretion. Entry Unit personnel should be referring all but the most glaringly obvious errors to the import specialist or designated reviewer for review. Overrides are reviewed by the Bureau of the Census. Requests for reverification will be sent to the import specialists if the overridden data remains outside the Census parameters and a sufficient explanation has not been provided. Procedures for requesting parameter changes are explained in Section E of this directive.

## **6.4 QUOTA ENTRIES**

**6.4.1** Filers must exercise extra care when preparing quota entries to ensure that all data is correct before transmission to Customs. If a Census warning message is generated by the system, all the data should be reviewed and any necessary corrections transmitted through the ABI system before the entry summary is presented to Customs. If the data appears to be correct, an explanatory note must be attached to the summary when it is presented to Customs. When a quota entry/entry summary with the attached explanation is received by Customs, the import specialist should analyze the questioned data and determine the appropriate action. A nonstatement entry/entry summary may be rejected back to the filer for correction as long as it is not in a quota accepted, held, or rejected status.

**6.4.2** A statement entry/entry summary which has not been paid, is not in a quota accepted, held, or rejected status, and has been deleted from the statement by Customs may also be rejected to the filer. A statement entry/entry summary which has been paid must be corrected by Customs. Once a quota entry/entry summary begins processing through ACS, and a Census warning message appears, it should be referred to the lead entry aid or supervisor for appropriate action. This action can include correction for typographical errors or other such obvious mistakes, rejection for substantive reasons, return to the import specialist for further review and/or override. This supersedes the instructions contained in Customs Directive 3550-24, "Entry Simplification-Entry Summary and Entry/Entry Summary Flow" dated September 8, 1987.

## **6.5 PARAMETER CHANGES**

**6.5.1** If it is determined that certain data, although correct, repeatedly appears as an error warning, a Request for Change in Census Parameters should be prepared and sent to the Bureau of the Census (see Attachment C).

**6.5.2** Describe the current parameters and the recommended changes. Sufficient evidence to justify the requested change must be provided. Acceptable evidence would include written explanations, several invoices, copies of Explanatory material and commercial brochures. It is possible that the parameters will be adjusted after a review of the request. Requests for examination and/or change of existing parameters may come from brokers, importers or U.S. Customs. Note: A copy of any requests should be sent to the Trade Statistics Branch, Office of Trade Programs U.S. Customs Service, 1300 Pennsylvania Avenue, Room 5.2C, Washington, D.C. 20229, so that they can be tracked.

**6.5.3** It is essential that Census warning messages be reconciled as quickly as possible because the Bureau of the Census cannot extract statistical data from an entry while a warning message exists.

**6.5.4** Below are listed some of the most common Census warnings which are overridden incorrectly:

**6.5.4.1** Entry Summaries for American goods returned, which show the exporting country (block 13) as U.S. instead of the correct foreign country of exportation.

**6.5.4.2** Only one reporting quantity is shown when two are required.

**6.5.4.3** Last two (statistical) digits of the tariff number are incorrectly reported.

**6.5.4.4** Parts of items, such as machines or computers, are classified under the tariff number for the actual item.

**6.5.4.5** Entire values and/or charges are reported in dollars and cents, without the decimals, when they should be rounded (i.e., 350 is reported as 35000).

Assistant Commissioner  
Office of Field Operations

Attachments

ATTACHMENT A  
ERROR MESSAGES

- #27A \*Census\* Improbable Country
- #27B \*Census\* QTY1/QTY2 (HTSUS 1)
- #27C \*Census\* OR-LO VAL/QTY (1) HTSUS 1
- #27D \*Census\* OR-HI VAL/QTY (1) HTSUS 1
- #27E \*Census\* OR-HI VAL/QTY (1) HTSUS 2
- #27F \*Census\* OR-HI VAL/QTY (2) HTSUS 1
- #27G \*Census\* Improbable Air HTSUS 1
- #27H \*Census\* Gross Weight-Air
- #27I \*Census\* Gross Weight-Vessel
- #27J \*Census\* OR-AGR VALUE/CHARGES
- #27K \*Census\* QTY1/QTY2 (HTSUS 2)
- #27L \*Census\* QTY1/QTY2 (HTSUS 3)
- #27M \*Census\* QTY2/QTY1 (HTSUS 1)
- #27P \*Census\* Maximum Value Exceeded
- #27Q \*Census\* Maximum Charges Exceeded
- #28A \*Census\* QTY2/QTY1 (HTSUS 2)
- #28B \*Census\* QTY2/QTY1 (HTSUS 3)
- #28C \*Census\* OR-LO VAL/QTY (1) HTSUS 2
- #28D \*Census\* OR-LO VAL/QTY (1) HTSUS 3
- #28E \*Census\* OR-LO VAL/QTY (2) HTSUS 1
- #28F \*Census\* OR-LO VAL/QTY (2) HTSUS 2

#28G \*Census\* OR-LO VAL/QTY (2) HTSUS 3

#28H \*Census\* OR-HI VAL/QTY (1) HTSUS 3

#28I \*Census\* OR-HI VAL/QTY (2) HTSUS 2

#28J \*Census\* OR-HI VAL/QTY (2) HTSUS 3

#28K \*Census\* Improbable Air HTSUS 2

#28L \*Census\* Improbable Air HTSUS 3

Error Message:      \*Census\* Qty 1/Qty 2  
                             \*Census\* Qty 2/Qty 1

Category: Ratio of quantities is out of range

Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) Net quantities (column 32 or CF 7501)
- 2) HTSUS (column 30 of CF 7501)

Reason:

A quantity ratio reject occurs when the quantity relationship between the two entered quantities as required by the HTSUS is not within Census parameters.

The quantity relationship is computed by dividing the two units of quantity as follows:

Qty 1/Qty 2 indicates the first quantity is divided by the second quantity.

Qty 2/Qty 1 indicates the second quantity is divided by the first quantity.

Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that the quantities and HTSUS are correct as reported. Make certain the quantities are reported in metric. Particular attention should be given to zero quantities since they rarely occur.

Changes should be made where applicable. If the entered data are correct and therefore changes to the data are not warranted, the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF 7 key on the terminal) should be utilized.

Error Message:      \*Census\*  
                         OR-LO Val/Qty (1)                    OR-HI Val/Qty (1)  
                         OR-LO Val/Qty (2)                    OR-HI Val/Qty (2)

Maximum Value Exceeded

Category: Unit Value Out of Range-Low or High Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) HTSUS (column 30 on the CF 7501)
- 2) Quantities (column 32 on the CF 7501)
- 3) Entered value (column 33 on the CF 7501)

Reason:

1. A unit value reject occurs when the unit value of an item is not within Census parameters. The unit value is determined by dividing the entered value by the entered quantity. Qty (1) indicates the value as divided by the first (or only) quantity was not within established limits. Qty (2) indicates the value as divided by the second quantity was not within established limits or
2. When the total entered value for the item exceeds \$100,000,000. This edit applies to items that do not require a quantity as well as those items that do require a quantity(ies).

Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that the HTSUS quantities and value are correct. Make certain the quantities are reported in metric. Particular attention should be given to zero quantities since they rarely occur. In the case of maximum value exceeded, this error message will only occur when the total entered value for any one line item in ACS exceeds \$100,000,000, regardless of the value shown on the CF 7501. Changes should be made where applicable.

If the entered data are correct and therefore changes to the data are not warranted, the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF 7 key on the terminal) should be utilized.

Error Message: \*Census\* Gross Weight-vessel

Category: Vessel shipping weight limit 22,680,000 kilograms exceeded.

Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) HTSUS (Column 30 of CF 7501)
- 2) Gross weight (column 31 or CF 7501)

Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that HTSUS and shipping weight are correct as reported. Changes should be made where applicable.

If the entered data are correct and therefore changes are not warranted the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF 7 key on terminal) should be utilized.

Error Message: \*Census\* Improbable Air HTSUS

Category: Improbable commodity for Air shipment

Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) HTSUS (Column 30 of CF 7501)
- 2) MOT (block 20 of CF 7501)
- 3) Importing Carrier (block 23 of CF 7501)

Reason: An improbable commodity reject will occur when it is unlikely for the commodity to be shipped by air:

Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that the HTSUS, MOT, and Importing Carrier are correct as reported. Changes should be made where applicable. Please note if block 20 is changed to reflect MOT as vessel, the five digit number code for the foreign port of lading, as listed in Department of Commerce Schedule K, should be recorded in block 24 of the CF 7501.

If the entered data are correct and therefore changes are not warranted, the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF 7 key on terminal) should be utilized.

Error Message: \*Census\* OR-AGR Value/Charges  
\*Census\* Maximum Charges Exceeded

Category: Aggregate charges to customs value ratio out of range

Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) Charges (column 33 of CF 7501)
- 2) Value (column 33 of CF 7501)
- 3) HTSUS (column 30 of CF 7501)
- 4) MOT (block 20 of CF 7501)

Reason:

1. A reject for this category occurs when the relationship between the aggregate charges and the entered value is not within the parameters as established by Census or
2. When the aggregate charges for any one line item exceeds \$5,000,000 for vessel shipments or \$1,000,000 for air shipments.

Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that the value, charges, HTSUS and MOT are correct as reported. In the case of maximum charges exceeded, this error message will only occur when the charges value for any one line item in ACS exceeds \$5,000,000 for vessel shipments or \$1,000,000 for air shipments, regardless of the value shown on the CF 7501. Changes should be made where applicable. If the entered data are correct and therefore changes to the data are not warranted, the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF 7 key on the terminal) should be utilized.

Error Message: \*Census\* Gross Weight Air

Category: 102,060 KGS air shipping weight limit exceeded

Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) Gross weight (column 31 of CF 7501)
- 2) HTSUS (column 30 of CF 7501)
- 3) MOT (block 20 of CF 7501)

#### 4) Importing Carrier (block 23 of CF 7501)

##### Reason:

All air shipments with a reported shipping weight of 102,060 kgs or more will reject for review.

##### Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that the gross weight, MOT and HTSUS are correct as reported. Changes should be made where applicable. Please note if block 20 is changed to reflect MOT as vessel, the five digit numeric code for the foreign port of lading as listed in Department of Commerce Schedule K should be recorded in block 24 of the CF 7501. If the entered data are correct and therefore changes are not warranted, the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF7 key on the terminal) should be utilized.

##### Error Message: \*Census\* Improbable Country

##### Category: Improbable Country

##### Data Elements to be reviewed:

- 1) Country of origin (block 15 or 28 on the CF 7501)
- 2) HTSUS (column 30 on the CF 7501)
- 3) In the case of American Goods returned, HTSUS 9801.00.10 the country of exportation (block 13 on the CF 7501)

##### Reason:

An improbable country of origin reject occurs when:

- (1) A country is unlikely to produce, mine or manufacture certain commodities,

Example: Netherlands Antilles (AN) and the Bahamas (BS) are often misreported as the country of origin for crude oil. These countries do not produce crude oil, only store it.

- (2) The countries of Cuba (CU), Albania (AL), Vietnam (VN), Nicaragua (NI), Mongolia (MN), Iran (IR), South Africa (ZA) Namibia (NA) or North Korea (KP) are reported since trade with these countries is unlikely or

(3) The TSUSA number is American goods returned and both the country of origin and the country of exportation are the United States (US).

(4) The country is not eligible for duty-free treatment for a "certified hand-loomed and folklore" product.

Resolution:

Commercial invoices or other competent evidence should be examined to verify that the country of origin and the HTSUS are correct as reported. Changes should be made where applicable.

In the case of American goods returned (HTSUS 9801.00.10), the country of export should not be shown as the United States (US).

In the case where the country of origin is unknown, two, asterisks (\*\*) should be placed in the space allotted for country of origin. This signifies that the country of exportation will be used for data collection purposes.

Please note if an entry summary covers merchandise from more than one country of origin, the word "Multi" is to be shown in block 15 of the CF 7501, and the various countries are to be listed in column 28 with their corresponding line item.

If the entered data are correct and therefore changes are not warranted the allowance feature (allowance block on reject slip; PF 7 key on the terminal) should be utilized.

ATTACHMENT B  
CUSTOMS PROCEDURES

VIEWING CENSUS PARAMETERS:

HSBS + 10 DIGIT HARMONIZED CLASSIFICATION  
<ENTER>>

The screen will show the upper and lower parameters for the entered tariff number.

CORRECTION BY CUSTOMS:

ENAC <ENTER>>

Enter correct information for each line displaying a Census warning message.  
<ENTER>>

OVERRIDE BY CUSTOMS:

ENAC <ENTER>>

As each line containing a Census warning appears, press <PF 7>> to override the warning. The system will indicate that the line has been accepted.

ATTACHMENT C  
REQUEST FOR CHANGE IN CENSUS PARAMETERS

To: Bureau of the Census  
Foreign Trade Division  
FOB #3 Room 3132  
Washington, D.C. 20233

(HTSUS # For which change is requested -- 8 digit)

Existing Parameters: (Attach screen print of HSBS or describe)

Recommended Parameters: (Annotated HSBS screen print or describe)

Narrative Justification For Change Request:

Requested By:

NAME

POSITION TITLE

PORT

TELEPHONE NUMBER