On May 29, 2012, U.S. Customs and Border Protection accepted the first Simplified Entries from the pilot participants at the ports of Atlanta, Chicago and Indianapolis. Under the Simplified Entry pilot, initially deployed in the Air mode of transportation, the carrier will submit the manifest/Air Cargo Advance Screening (ACAS) security filing and the importer will submit the Simplified Entry data set. The Simplified Entry data set consists of 12 required and three optional data elements and replaces the 27 data elements required on the CBP Form 3461.

Since Simplified Entry is considered a paperless program, pilot participants are not required to submit the CBP Form 3461. The Simplified Entry is only accepted electronically. Thus, CBP will not be creating courtesy copies or otherwise stamping forms. CBP does, however, recognize that a paperless environment will pose challenges to non-automated entities such as consolidated freight stations and terminals that do not receive electronic releases from CBP.

Consequently, in order to support the pilot, CBP will allow non-automated facilities, on an interim basis, to release cargo based on screen printouts presented to them by filers (importers, brokers, etc.). The printout should have at a minimum the shipment ID and quantity being released, the type of release as well as clear identification of who presented the release information. For audit purposes, this will satisfy due diligence on behalf of the non-automated facility. In the event that cargo that is unreleased or on hold is released from a non-automated facility where they received a release from the filer, CBP will seek remedy from the party who provided such information to the non-automated facility. Record retention guidelines will also apply.

It is also important all parties understand that this is an interim process and that in order to effectively operate in an increasingly paperless environment, non-automated facilities are strongly encouraged to automate as functionality is delivered in the Automated Commercial Environment.