



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

International Trade Data System (ITDS)

The International Trade Data System (ITDS) is an interagency program to establish a single window through which the data required by government agencies for international trade transactions may be submitted by the trade. The Security and Accountability for Every Port Act (SAFE Port Act) (P.L. 109-347) of 2006 mandated that all agencies which require documentation for clearing or licensing the importation and exportation of cargo to participate in ITDS. Currently, 47 agencies are working together to implement the goals of ITDS as Partner Government Agencies (PGAs). The technology backbone for ITDS is the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE). By providing a centralized online access point to connect U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP), the trade community, and PGAs, ACE will ultimately become the “single window” for all trade and government agencies involved in importing and exporting. ACE will allow agencies to obtain data more quickly, process cargo more expeditiously and identify unsafe, dangerous, or prohibited shipments. Three initiatives are being implemented as key building blocks to the “single window” vision.

Document Image System (DIS)

This capability allows trade participants to supply electronically supporting documentation in image file form needed during the cargo release and entry summary processes to CBP and PGAs. DIS also integrates with the ACE Secure Data Portal (the Web-based access point connecting CBP, the international trade community and PGAs) to allow authorized CBP and PGA personnel access to the imaged documents in order to perform coordinated document reviews. Further expanding the use of the DIS, a pilot is underway to accept e-mail based submissions of Export Manifests for ocean shipments via DIS.

PGA Message Set

The PGA Message Set automates the collection, processing and sharing of information required by PGAs from importers and their brokers through the Automated Broker Interface (ABI). Data submitted through the PGA Message Set in conjunction with an ACE Entry or ACE Entry Summary will replace the myriad of paper forms currently submitted to several Federal agencies by the trade community during the cargo importation process. The PGA Message Set is planned to be delivered as part of a subsequent phase of the successful ACE Cargo Release/Simplified Entry pilot initiated in 2012.



PGA Interoperability Web Services (IWS)

IWS is a set of interface standards which enables CBP and PGA systems to talk to one another and to share information, documents, and events of interest. The IWS gives PGAs greater access to the data they need and increases information sharing and collaboration between CBP and PGAs. This interoperability framework is expected to integrate and automate the various manual data transfer and collaboration activities that take place today in support of the cargo review and release processes. CBP has successfully integrated the U.S. Coast Guard, the Food Safety Inspection Service and Consumer Product Safety Commission into the IWS framework. Work is ongoing to implement IWS with other PGAs, such as the Food and Drug Administration, the National Highway Transportation Safety Administration, and the U.S. Census.

The benefits of ITDS are substantial:

- Reduction or elimination of paper forms will reduce handling costs to the filers, CBP and the PGAs.
- Legitimate trade will be approved for release into the commerce more quickly resulting in greater cost savings for both Government and private sector.
- Access to electronic data will improve targeting, based on a risk-management approach, to more precisely target the highest risk people, cargo, and conveyances crossing the border. Those considered low-risk will move more quickly and smoothly through ports of entry and exit.
- Policy formulation and review will be improved by providing more accurate and complete international trade data, more sophisticated access to this data, and improved timeliness for decision makers.
- Federal agencies with border responsibilities will be better able to work with the trade to improve trade compliance.