



U.S. Customs and Border Protection

CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND EXPERTISE TEST GUIDELINES

**RESPONSIBILITIES AND PROCEDURES FOR
PARTICIPATING ACCOUNTS AND THEIR BROKERS,
AGENTS, OR FILERS**

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CENTERS OF EXCELLENCE AND EXPERTISE TEST GUIDELINES

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BACKGROUND

The Centers of Excellence and Expertise (Centers) bring all of CBP's trade expertise to bear on a single industry in a strategic location. They are staffed with numerous trade positions using account management principles and operational skills to authoritatively facilitate trade.

The Centers also serve as resources to the broader trade community and to CBP's U.S. government partners. Center personnel answer questions, provide information and develop comprehensive trade facilitation strategies to address uniformity and compliance concerns.

While revenue collection will continue to be carried out at the ports of entry, the centers will perform all validation activities, protests, and post entry amendment/post summary correction reviews. The Center may also process prior disclosure validations for participating accounts within their industry if the disclosing party chooses to submit the prior disclosure to its designated Center instead of the CBP port of entry of the disclosed violation. The scope and functions will expand incrementally until the operational trade functions that traditionally reside with the ports of entry are transitioned to the Centers.

For purposes of this document, the term “participating accounts” refers to businesses that have been accepted to participate in the Centers’ test program announced in the Federal Register. Protests currently handled by the Office of International Trade/Regulations & Rulings, such as requests for further reviews and requests to void the denial of the protests, will remain with Regulations and Rulings.

By redirecting work involving participating accounts to centralized, industry-specific locations, ports of entry are able to more effectively focus resources on high-risk shipments and importers that may pose a danger to U.S. border security, harm the health and safety of consumers, or violate U.S. trade laws and intellectual property rights critical to our nation’s economic competitiveness.

Action	Benefits
Eliminates unnecessary duplicative work from compliant imports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fewer cargo delays • Reduced costs • Greater predictability
Ports of Entry focus shifts to high-risk shipments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More complex enforcement work • Improved enforcement results: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased import safety ○ Increased revenue protection ○ Reduced economic loss to IPR theft
Single Point of Contact for inquiries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improved relationship with CBP as small/medium-sized importers have a streamlined inquiry process for resolving concerns • Increased uniformity and transparency for the trade
Cross-functional expertise	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment for in-depth learning to increase CBP expertise and therefore enforcement

The approach to trade processing facilitated by the new Centers will reduce transaction costs for the trade community, facilitate legitimate trade through risk segmentation, increase agency expertise and deliver greater transparency and uniformity of action within a given industry.

CENTER ORGANIZATION & RESPONSIBILITIES

CBP has ten Centers that cover the full spectrum of imported products. The ten Centers and their responsible industries are:

- Agriculture & Prepared Products, coordinated from Miami, specializes in agriculture, aquaculture, animal products, vegetable products, prepared foods, beverages, alcohol, tobacco or similar industries.
- Apparel, Footwear & Textiles, coordinated from San Francisco, specializes in wearing apparel, footwear, textile mill, textile mill products, or similar industries.
- Automotive & Aerospace, coordinated from Detroit, specializes in automotive, aerospace, or other transportation equipment and related parts industries.
- Base Metals, coordinated from Chicago, specializes in steel, steel mill products, ferrous and nonferrous metal, or similar industries.
- Consumer Products & Mass Merchandising, coordinated from Atlanta, specializes in household goods, consumer products, or similar industries and mass merchandisers of products typically sold for home use.
- Electronics, coordinated from Los Angeles, specializes in information technology, integrated circuits, automated data processing equipment, and consumer electronics.
- Industrial & Manufacturing Materials, coordinated from Buffalo, specializes in plastics, polymers, rubber, leather, wood, paper, stone, glass, precious stones and precious metals, or similar industries.
- Machinery, coordinated from Laredo, specializes in tools, machine tools, production equipment, instruments, or similar industries.
- Petroleum, Natural Gas & Minerals, coordinated from Houston, specializes in petroleum, natural gas, petroleum related products, minerals, and mining industries.
- Pharmaceuticals, Health & Chemicals, coordinated from New York, specializes in pharmaceuticals, health-related equipment, and products of the chemical and allied industries.

Each Center will perform certain entry and post summary functions for their participating accounts in accordance with the selection criteria outlined in the respective Federal Register notice. The transition of all revenue related functions will occur incrementally over time until they reside entirely within the Centers. The procedures described below delineate the responsibilities of accounts that are participating in the Centers' test program announced in the Federal Register as well as which processes have been transitioned for each of the Centers. This

document will be modified as the Centers mature and take on additional responsibilities. Additionally, some trade functions, such as drawback and reconciliation, have yet to be transitioned.

PARTICIPATING ACCOUNT RESPONSIBILITIES

The Centers are industry focused, but account based. Participating accounts will have the opportunity to volunteer for the Center that best fits their business. For efficiency and trade facilitation, all consumption entries filed before and during participation in the test, except for antidumping and countervailing duty entries, will be processed by the designated Center, regardless of the commodity listed on the entry line. Centers may collaborate to resolve issues for accounts that cross industry assignments. In this way, importers can truly be managed by account.

Participating accounts should implement processes and procedures to transition to an automated and paperless environment in order to realize the benefits of an industry focused and account based processing concept. Because the Centers operate in a virtual environment, participating accounts are strongly encouraged to make full use of existing automated tools and systems such as ACE for transmission of entry summaries, the ACE portal for transmission of supporting documentation and the Document Image System (DIS) for transmission of invoices. In addition, it is highly recommended that each participating account notifies their filer of their acceptance into a Center, as this will affect the filing and submission of their entries and related documents.

CBP and the trade community will need to work together as we strive to transform trade processing and provide for national processing using account based principles.

FILER RESPONSIBILITIES

Filers will continue to assist their clients in meeting import and export requirements. For post-entry activities where they would normally interact with the port, filers will now interact with the appropriate Center on behalf of their participating account. Filers and Custom House Brokers are integral partners for the Center process and CBP's trade transformation efforts.

CENTER TEAM DESIGNATION

The Centers have been assigned unique team codes for identification purposes. These codes will serve as the primary indicators that the authority to process a particular entry summary or post-summary activity belongs with the Center. Below are the respective teams for each of the Centers as well as contact information:

<u>Team #</u>	<u>Industry</u>	<u>Location</u>	<u>Email Address</u>
001	Pharmaceuticals, Health Chemicals	New York	CEE-Pharmaceuticals@cbp.dhs.gov CEE-Chemicals@cbp.dhs.gov

002	Agriculture & Prepared Products	Miami	CEE-Agriculture@cbp.dhs.gov
003	Automotive & Aerospace	Detroit	CEE-Automotive@cbp.dhs.gov CEE-Aerospace@cbp.dhs.gov
004	Apparel, Footwear & Textiles	San Francisco	CEE-Apparel@cbp.dhs.gov
005	Base Metals	Chicago	CEE-Basemetals@cbp.dhs.gov
006	Petroleum, Natural Gas & Minerals	Houston	CEE-Petroleum@cbp.dhs.gov
007	Electronics	Los Angeles	CEE-Electronics@cbp.dhs.gov
008	Consumer Products & Mass Merchandising	Atlanta	CEE-Consumer@cbp.dhs.gov
009	Industrial & Manufacturing Materials	Buffalo	CEE-Industrialmaterials@cbp.dhs.gov
010	Machinery	Laredo	CEE-Machinery@cbp.dhs.gov

RELEASE /ENTRY PROCESS

The release and entry procedures for participating accounts remain the same and will be processed by the applicable port of entry.

Participating accounts do not need to change their existing shipping patterns and may continue to import through the ports of entry as they have in the past, regardless of their status as a Center participant. Participating accounts should continue to submit any necessary documentation for release purposes and adhere to current regulations as they have in the past. Cargo release issues related to maintaining holds and examination authority, cargo releases, which include agriculture-related inspections and processing, will continue to be handled at the port.

ENTRY SUMMARY PROCESSES

Entry summaries for participating accounts will continue to be submitted through the Automated Commercial System (ACS) or the Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) and will not be required to change the respective port of entry. Upon acceptance as a participating account, the Centers will process applicable entry summaries, regardless of the port of entry or commodity.

Upon receipt of “docs required” message for an ACS or ACE entry summary, the participating account or its filer will transmit the necessary documentation to the Center electronically via the ACE portal, the DIS or the Center’s email address. The date and time of this out-going message

from the filer to CBP whether by portal, DIS or email, will serve as the functional equivalent of the physical date and time stamp at the port office. The required documents and the regulatory or statutory timeframes for submission have not been changed. Due to the 10MB size limitation of attachments, the document may need to be sent using multiple transmissions.

Subject Line Submission

Subject	Abbreviation
Docs Required	DR
Census	CE
Protest	PR
Cancellation	CA
Form 28	F28
Form 29	F29
DCMA Cert	C
TSCA Cert	C
ADCVD	A
General Inquiry	I
PEA	PE
Reject	R
Prior Disclosure	PD
520(d)	5D

Static subject line: **Subject abbreviation,account name,entry number,port**

- The subject abbreviations are listed above (1-3 characters) followed by a comma and no space;
- The account name (the first 10 characters of the account name-without abbreviations, each separate word should be capitalized) followed by a comma and no space;
- The entry number (12 characters, with a dash in between the filer code and the entry number) followed by a comma and no space;
- The 4-digit port code.
- Examples: I,AmericanEu,123-45678901,5301
F28,Syngenta,234-56789012,4601
DR,NokiaInc,345-67890123,2704

Circumstances ranging from system transmission issues to natural disasters which close a particular port are identified as “snow days”. Since revenue processing remains at the ports of entry, snow days do not impact the Centers for collection purposes. Center personnel will monitor snow days to ensure that liquidated damages are not issued for the late filing of entry summary documents to the Center. Filers may communicate with the Center if a snow day arises.

Participating accounts or their filer should continue to file EIP/RLF entry summaries as usual and the Center will process accordingly.

Revenue Collection

Participating accounts or their filer will continue to submit payments to the respective port of entry for all Entry/Entry Summaries, Non-Automated Broker Interface (ABI) entry summaries, ABI non-statement (ABI/N) and ABI Statement (ABI/S). Those participants or filers that use Periodic Monthly Statement processes may continue to do so. Although participating accounts or their filers will submit any “docs required” directly to the Center, a cashier/record copy of the entry summary (or equivalent) must be submitted with the check and/or statement to the port of entry for collection. The Center team number specified on the statement or the cashier/record copy of the CBP Form 7501 that is submitted will indicate that the summary is for a Center and that the documents required should be submitted directly to that Center.

All entry summaries identified with ABI non-statement (ABI/N) in block 2 of the CBP Form 7501, need to be placed into CBP status. All entry summaries received by the Center that are not paid on statement or where zero money is due (ABI/N) need to be accepted in ACS by the appropriate Center when presented.

A statement paid using ACH (ABI/A) need not be submitted to the port as it is processed electronically. Those entry summaries that received a documents required message must be sent to the Center.

Resolution of discrepancies in the amount of monies presented and/or cashier documents as well as assessment and collection of liquidated damages will continue to be handled by the port of entry.

Quota

Due to time restraints for processing entry summaries subject to quota restrictions, participating accounts will continue to submit all quota entry summaries to the port of entry for processing.

Summary Rejection or Cancellation

If a participating account’s entry summary is rejected, the reject notice will be issued by the Center.

Participating accounts should electronically submit requests for entry cancellations to their respective Center.

Census Rejects

If a participating account receives a Census reject for an ACS entry, the entry summary package including the invoices as well as the census resolution form must be electronically transmitted to the Center’s email address in order to resolve the Census issues, unless other arrangements have

been made with the Center. The timeframes concerning the submission of these documents remain the same, only the documents should be submitted to the CEE for processing instead of the port.

Issuance of Request for Information and Notice of Action

Participating accounts will only receive Requests for Information (CBP Form 28) and a Notices of Action (CBP Form 29) from their respective Center. Participating accounts will be responsible for timely responses directly to the Center.

Anti-Dumping/Countervailing Duty Entries

Anti-dumping and Countervailing Duty (ADCVD) entry summaries submitted prior to participation in the Center test will remain assigned to the ports of entry for processing. Upon acceptance as a participating account, all subsequent ADCVD entry summaries should be filed as usual; however the Center will process the entry summary.

Participating accounts that receive a “docs required” message for ACE and ACS ADCVD entry summaries will need to electronically transmit the necessary documentation through the ACE portal or to the Center’s email address. Blanket reimbursement certificates for participating accounts will need to be sent electronically to the Center’s email address.

Participating accounts should submit requests for administrative refund for overpayment on an ADCVD entry summary directly to the Center for approval.

Temporary Importations Under Bond

The ports will maintain current responsibilities for Temporary Importations under Bond (TIB) entries for both release and entry summary. Enforcement actions will be coordinated with the appropriate Center.

United States Virgin Islands (USVI)

Participating accounts or their filers that file entry summaries at USVI ports of entry should continue to do so. Entry summaries filed at USVI ports have not been transitioned to the Centers and will continue to be processed by the port of entry as usual.

Liquidation

The bulletin notice of liquidation (CBP Form 4333) will still be posted at the ports of entry; however liquidation for participating accounts, with the exception of quota entries, will be processed by the Center.

POST-SUMMARY PROCESSES

Post-Summary Adjustments

Post-Summary Corrections

Participating accounts will transmit Post-Summary Corrections (PSC) as they normally have, however the Center will process the PSC. When a participating account's PSC is transmitted in ACE and documents are required, the documents should be electronically transmitted through the ACE portal or to the assigned Center's email address.

If a participating account submits payment for a PSC, the payment along with a corrected copy of a CBP Form 7501 must be presented to the port of entry for collection.

Post-Entry Amendments

Participating accounts must submit Post-Entry Amendments (PEA) paperwork to the Center by means of the Center's email attribute. The Center will review and process the PEA as per current procedures.

If a participating account submits payment for a PEA it must be presented to the port of entry for collection.

Internal Advice Requests

Participating accounts should submit requests for internal advice electronically to the appropriate Center's email address for further coordination with the Office of International Trade, Regulations and Rulings. Once the internal advice request is answered, the Center will coordinate with the requestor to ensure they are made aware of the decision.

Protests and Petitions

Participating accounts or their filer should file protests electronically through the Automated Broker Interface (ABI). Participating accounts must add a note in the electronic filing that designates the Center team. The Center will process the protest in accordance with current procedures.

If a participating account or their filer chooses to not file protests through ABI, a scanned copy of the CBP Form 19 and all supporting documentation must be submitted electronically to the Center via the ACE portal or the Center's email address. The Center will advise the participating account once the protest number is assigned.

Reconciliation Entries

Participating accounts or their filer should continue to file reconciliation entries to the assigned port of entry. Upon transition of reconciliation processing to the Centers, the participating accounts will be notified of any new procedures or locations for reconciliation filing.

At this time, reconciliation processing has not been transitioned to Centers.

Drawback

Participating accounts or their filer should continue to file drawback claims at one of the four existing Drawback Centers (New York, Chicago, San Francisco or Houston). Upon transition of drawback processing to the Centers, the participating accounts will be notified of any new procedures or location for drawback filing.

At this time, drawback processing has not been transitioned to Centers.

ENFORCEMENT PROCESSES

Enforcement actions will continue to be handled by the ports, such as notices of detention or seizure, as well as issuance of liquidated damages, penalties, petition processing and other FP&F actions. Enforcement actions involving participating accounts will be coordinated with the Center until such time that automation allows for the Center to process FP&F actions. Therefore, participating accounts or their filer should continue to file responses to enforcement/FP&F actions with the port of entry from which they originated.

Prior Disclosures

Participating accounts or their filer may continue to submit prior disclosures with a CBP officer at the CBP port of entry of the disclosed violation, or may choose to file the prior disclosure with their designated Center. Requirements concerning the filing of a prior disclosure, as well as the timeframes for filing remain the same.

REQUEST TO DISCONTINUE PARTICIPATION

Participation in the test is voluntary. At any time during the test a participant may withdraw. To withdraw from the test the participant must submit a letter to U.S. Customs and Border Protection, Office of Field Operations, Trade Operations Division, 1300 Pennsylvania Ave., NW, Suite 2.3D, Washington, DC 20229, or an email to CEE@cbp.dhs.gov. The letter or email must include the name and contact information for the participant withdrawing from the test, the name of the assigned Center, the importer of record (IOR) number(s), and the intended withdrawal date. The letter or email must be received 30 days prior to the requested withdrawal date. CBP will respond within 15 days of receipt of the request with written notification of the effective date of withdrawal. CBP may contact the withdrawing participant with regard to any additional information that may be needed.

All consumption entries filed before and during participation in the test, except for antidumping and countervailing duty entries will be processed by the designated CEE even if the test participant voluntarily withdraws from the test. Similarly, any protests filed after participation in the test commences will be processed and decided upon by the CEE Director even if a participant withdraws from the test before the protest is decided.

TABLE OF UPDATES

Version Number	Section	Description of Change
1.1	Center Organization and Responsibilities	Addition/description of future Centers.
	Participating Account Responsibilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Additional clarification concerning processing entry summaries, • Recommendation that participating accounts notify their filers.
	Filer Responsibilities	Clarification.
	Center Team Designation	Added all 10 Centers.
	Entry Summary Processes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Added date/time of presentation clarification, • Added snow days section.
	Revenue Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clarification of which documents are sent to the port vs. Center, • When a statement is required to be filed.
	Post Summary Adjustments	Clarification that when a PSC is filed and documents are required, the documents must be filed--not "may".
	Entry Summary Enforcement Processes	Clarification that the Center will be included in the enforcement process, although automation currently does not allow FP&F actions.
	Prior Disclosures	Clarification that there have been no changes in timeframes/filing.
	Request to Discontinue Participation	New Section.
1.2	Subject Line Submission	New Section.
	Revenue Collection	Clarification of which statements need to be submitted to CBP.
	Request to Discontinue Participation	Clarified where processing of entry summaries would be completed.
	Table of Updates	New Section.
1.3	Entry Summary Processes	Deleted team designation indicator on statement sentence-CBP continues to work on getting the Center team indicator to print on preliminary statements.