



## Australian Customs Cargo Advice

Number 09/05

### Sea Cargo Status – Service Levels (Replacing ACCA 08/13)

This Australian Customs Cargo Advice (ACCA) outlines a number of service levels the Australian Customs and Border Protection Service (Customs and Border Protection) employ in relation to cargo examination including;

- information required before risk assessment of sea cargo can be finalised;
- the timeframes that Customs and Border Protection aims to complete its risk assessment within, once all required information is available;
- the services offered when those timeframes cannot be met; and
- information on ways in which industry can assist Customs and Border Protection to minimise the impact on the sea cargo supply chain.

This ACCA also outlines the introduction of increased Customs and Border Protection inspection arrangements in four regional ports and some refinement of the volume of cargo in other locations.

This ACCA should be read in conjunction with:

- ACCA 08/11 - Improving Certainty of Consolidated Status in the Integrated Cargo System, and
- ACCA 09/04 - Sea Cargo Inspection and Examination Arrangements

This ACCA does not change the existing legislative regime for sea cargo reporting in any way. Customs and Border Protection continues to require the Sea Cargo Report to be lodged at least 48 hours prior to first port of arrival in Australia in accordance with the legislative reporting regime.

#### **Risk Assessment Information Requirements and Timeframes**

It is important that Customs and Border Protection ensures that all risks are identified and dealt with prior to release of cargo into the Australian community. Consequently, Customs and Border Protection's screening of sea cargo for risk is not finalised until all information required for risk assessment has been provided.

#### **Risk Assessment Information Requirements**

Customs and Border Protection uses both the Sea Cargo Report and the Full Import Declaration (or other relevant declarations such as the Self Assessed Clearance) for risk assessment purposes.

Customs and Border Protection requires final and accurate versions of these documents in order to complete the risk assessment.

### Risk Assessment and Certain Status Timeframes

In November 2008, Customs and Border Protection implemented modifications to the Integrated Cargo System (ICS) to process all facets of risk assessment on import declarations in real time. This means that importers and brokers will be aware of potential “border processing holds” immediately after declaration lodgement. Australian Customs Cargo Advice 08/11 provides further details about ICS risk assessments.

Users **cannot** be certain of status until all required risk assessment documentation has been lodged and has correctly linked to the declaration.

Once all required risk assessment documentation has been lodged, has correctly linked to the declaration and the following status is displayed, users can be confident (apart from exceptional circumstances) that there will be no further Customs and Border Protection impediment to delivery. Vehicle slot times **can** be booked in the vehicle booking systems at this point (subject to payment where necessary).

<i>Consolidated Status</i>		<i>Held</i>	
ACS Cargo Report	Y	AQIS Cargo Report	Y
ACS Declaration	\$	AQIS Declaration	Y
<i>Consolidated Status</i>		<i>Clear</i>	
ACS Cargo Report	Y	AQIS Cargo Report	Y
ACS Declaration	Y	AQIS Declaration	Y

Once all required risk assessment documentation has been lodged, has correctly linked to the declaration and the following status is displayed, the declaration is being evaluated by Customs and Border Protection and may be subject to a “border processing” hold. Vehicle slot times should not be booked in the vehicle booking systems.

<i>Consolidated Status</i>		<i>Held</i>	
ACS Cargo Report	Y	AQIS Cargo Report	Y
ACS Declaration	<b>N</b>	AQIS Declaration	Y

In cases where Customs and Border Protection has held the declaration for assessment, it is expected that the majority of these holds will be assessed within 24 hours. Within 24 hours, the status of your import declaration should change to “clear” or “finalised” however the evaluation may move to the related cargo report, hence the consolidated cargo status will remain “held”. Vehicle slot times should **not** be booked in the vehicle booking systems until the consolidated status is changed to “clear” or where payment is the only remaining requirement for clearance.

Once all required risk assessment documentation has been lodged, has correctly linked to the declaration and the following status is displayed, the cargo has been evaluated and is subject to a “border processing” hold.

Vehicle slot times should **not** be booked in the vehicle booking systems until the consolidated status is changed to “clear” or where payment is the only remaining requirement for clearance.

<i>Consolidated Status</i>		<i>Held</i>	
ACS Cargo Report	N	AQIS Cargo Report	Y
ACS Declaration	\$	AQIS Declaration	Y

## **Exceptional Circumstances - “Clear” status changed to “Held” - support services provided by Customs and Border Protection**

On occasions, Customs and Border Protection will change the status of a container after it has received a “clear” status.

Where this occurs 24 hours or more after the lodgement of all required risk assessment documentation, arrangements are in place to contact the Customs broker to advise of the late status change<sup>1</sup>.

Industry and Customs and Border Protection have agreed on the following services in relation to late status change:

1. Customs and Border Protection to contact Customs brokers by telephone advising details of late status changes to sea cargo. A confirmation email will also be sent to assist Customs brokers in advising their clients of delays in cargo release;
2. Customs and Border Protection to respond within twenty-four (24) hours to industry requests for updated information about the status of late change consignments. The focus of advice will be to confirm that clearance activities are in train and that there is no further work required by Industry to expedite clearance.

Attachment A provides the criteria for notification under this service level approach.

ICS release 8.4.11 made a change to the ICS Client Record to allow Declaration Status Advices (DSAs) to be sent to clients who require them. The DSA is intended as a means by which updated cargo status information, for the cargo declared in their Import Declaration, is communicated to the client to assist them in obtaining clearance of their cargo. Examples of scenarios where DSA will provide the client with updated information for an import declaration are:

- the linking of the Import Declaration to Cargo Lines;
- changes in the Status of linked Cargo Lines; and
- the processing of the Document by Customs and Border Protection and AQIS resulting in the placing and lifting of assessments on the document.

DSA is an optional message and clients must nominate if they wish to receive DSA messages. Further information can be found using the link

[http://www.cargosupport.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/DSA\\_Message.pdf](http://www.cargosupport.gov.au/webdata/resources/files/DSA_Message.pdf)

## **Minimising Customs and Border Protection’s Impact on the Supply Chain**

Customs and Border Protection seeks to minimise the impact of our interventions on legitimate trade in the sea cargo environment. We have logistics arrangements in place with the stevedores, transport providers and a range of other service providers to facilitate the efficient inspection and examination of containers at examination facilities in Melbourne, Sydney, Brisbane, Fremantle, Adelaide, Darwin, Bell Bay, Townsville and Newcastle.

For cargo examination in Darwin, Townsville, Newcastle and Bell Bay, the unique shipping patterns at these ports may result in delays in accessing some containers. You can minimise the chances of delays by ensuring that full and final documentation is lodged with Customs and Border Protection in accordance with ACCA 08/11.

## **Additional Free Storage Arrangements – Sydney, Melbourne, Brisbane and Fremantle**

Stevedores currently provide three days free storage for containers once they are declared available for delivery after discharge from the vessel.

An arrangement has been negotiated with the stevedores where containers selected for Customs and Border Protection intervention will receive a minimum of 24 hours free storage when they are returned from the Container Examination Facility, subject to particular conditions.

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<sup>1</sup> **Late Status Change** containers are those where Customs and Border Protection places a hold on the cargo more than 24 hours after all required information (including the Sea Cargo Report, the Full Import Declaration or any other relevant declaration such as a Self Assessed Clearance) has been received.

To ensure that your cargo will qualify for the additional free storage arrangements if it is selected for Customs and Border Protection intervention, Customs and Border Protection recommends that all required documentation is provided at least 24 hours prior to the arrival of the vessel at the port of discharge. This will allow Customs and Border Protection time to have finalised its risk assessment, and meet the terms for access to the additional free storage arrangements.

If you report later than these suggested timeframes, Customs and Border Protection cannot ensure that you will be eligible for the additional free storage arrangements.

Vessel arrival times are published on the internet via a number of sources, including Port Authorities and Lloyds List.

### **Additional Free Storage Arrangements – Adelaide, Darwin, Launceston, Townsville and Newcastle**

Containers selected for Cargo Examination Facility intervention in Adelaide, Darwin, Townsville, Newcastle and Launceston, will receive existing storage arrangements (a minimum of three days) when they are returned from the Cargo Examination Facility.

To ensure that your cargo will qualify for the additional free storage arrangements it is recommended that all required documentation is provided at least **24 hours** prior to the arrival of the vessel at the port of discharge. This will allow Customs and Border Protection time to have finalised the risk assessment, and meet the terms for access to the additional free storage arrangements.

Vessel arrival times are published on the internet via a number of sources, including Port Authorities and Lloyds List.

### **Significant Delays and Advice to Industry**

In situations where there are significant delays in inspecting cargo at its CEFs, Customs and Border Protection may advise industry of the delays through: an email advice; a notice to ICS users; a message on the ICS website; or advice to industry associations to let their respective members know.

There have been very few instances where there have been significant delays as a result of major breakdowns or incidents at the CEFs. Customs and Border Protection seeks to maintain its equipment and facilities to a high standard to minimise the potential for such delays. Customs and Border Protection also has contingency arrangements in place to minimise the impact on industry. Normal clearance and advice about the clearance of cargo arrangements through Customs and Border Protection ICS will continue to operate.

### **Mandatory Reporting Timeframes**

Legislative reporting timeframes are unchanged. The Sea Cargo Report must continue to be lodged 48 hours prior to arrival at the first Australian port.

Industry adoption of the suggested lodgement timeframes for the FID (or other relevant declaration such as a Self Assessed Clearance) will assist Customs and Border Protection to complete the border risk assessment function earlier and ensure access to the additional free storage arrangements offered by the stevedores.

It is acknowledged that there are a number of issues that can make it difficult for industry to meet the reporting timeframes outlined above, and Customs and Border Protection will continue to work with industry representatives to resolve these issues, and to improve the cargo end-to-end business process.

### **Contacting Customs and Border Protection**

Any queries about matters addressed in this ACCA, any requests for updated information about the status of late status change consignments and any complaints relating to them should be directed to the Cargo Management Cell within the Customs Information & Support Centre (CI&SC) by:

- telephone on 1300 558 099
- facsimile on (02) 8337 6713
- email at [cmc@customs.gov.au](mailto:cmc@customs.gov.au)

Information on this and other cargo support matters can be found at [www.cargosupport.gov.au](http://www.cargosupport.gov.au)

### **Making a complaint or offering a compliment**

Customs and Border Protection recognises the public's right to comment on our services and is interested in what any person has to say.

To comment on any aspect of our service, anyone can;

- Speak to a Customs and Border Protection officer
- Complete a reply paid comment sheet, available at Customs and Border Protection offices
- Write to the Complaints and Compliments Network, free of charge  
Complaints and Compliments  
Australian Customs Service  
GPO 9834  
In your capital city

Contact the Complaints and Compliments Network on 1800 228 227 or via email at [comments@customs.gov.au](mailto:comments@customs.gov.au)

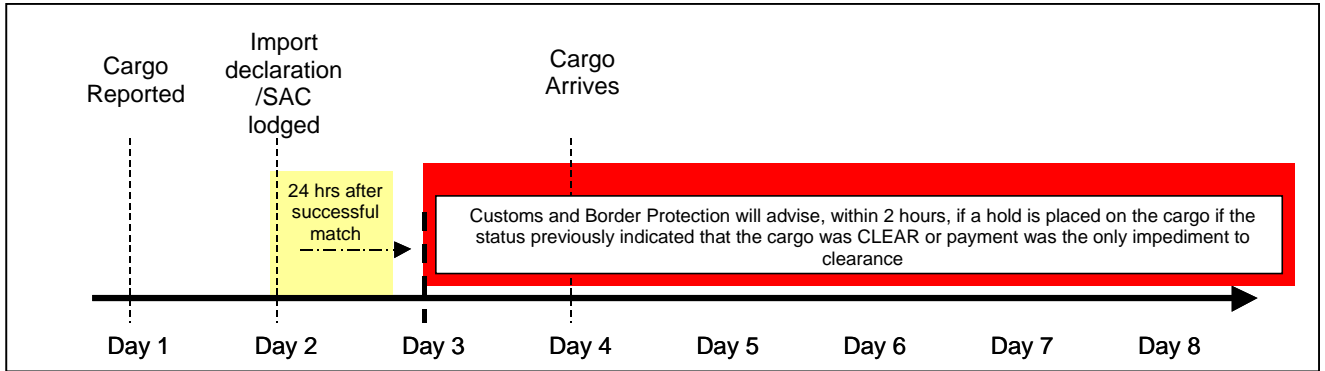
When making a complaint related to sea cargo, all available shipping and cargo information should be included.

Complaints will be fully investigated and Customs and Border Protection will aim to respond to the complainant within 15 business days of receiving the complaint.

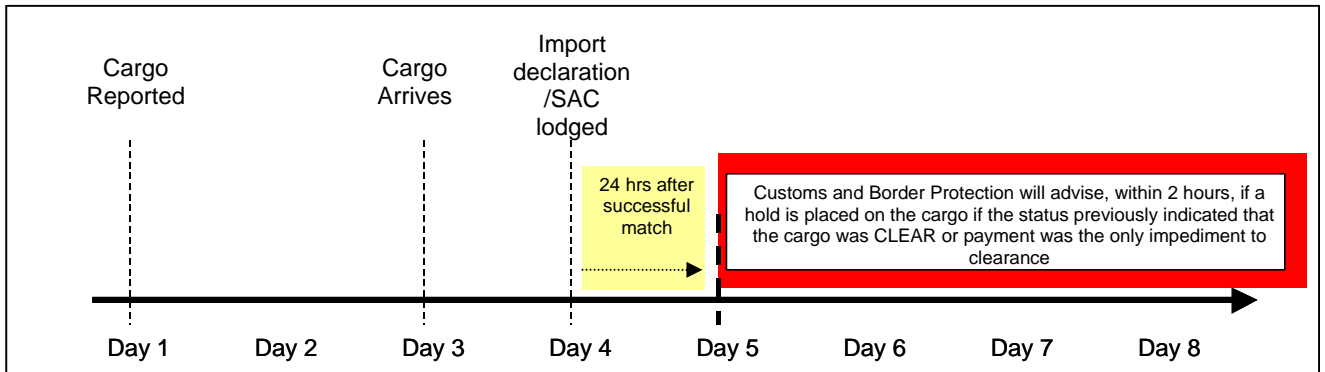
Jaclyne Fisher  
National Director  
Cargo Division  
November 2009

**Examples of when the late status change process will operate.**

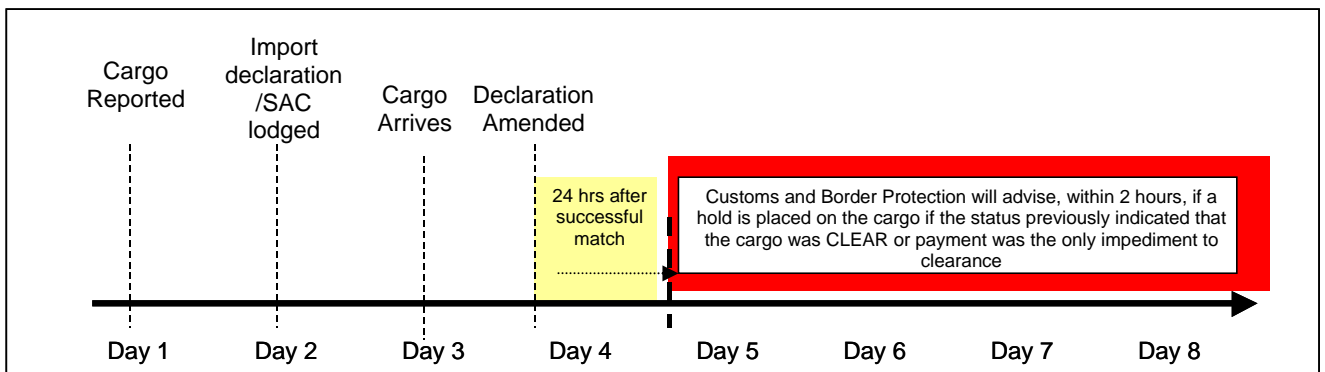
1. When the declaration is lodged and links to a cargo report prior to arrival.



2. When the declaration is lodged and links to a cargo report after arrival.



3. When the declaration is lodged and links to a cargo report prior to arrival followed by an amendment to the declaration after arrival.



**Criteria for notification under this service level approach.**

Customs brokers can be certain of cargo status twenty-four hours after all required information (including the Sea Cargo Report, the Full Import Declaration or any other relevant declaration such as a Self Assessed Clearance) is received by Customs and Border Protection.

Where Customs and Border Protection places a hold on cargo after this period, Customs and Border Protection will contact the Customs broker and advise them of the late status change.

Customs and Border Protection will only contact the Customs broker in these circumstances if a hold is placed on cargo where the status previously indicated that the cargo was CLEAR or payment was the only impediment to clearance.

Previous Cargo status		Customs and Border Protection to advise of a late status change
CLEAR	Cargo has been cleared and an Authority to Deal issued.	Yes
CONDLEAR	Cargo is cleared pending certain conditions being met such as fumigation for AQIS or s71E application.	Yes
\$YYY	Cargo report and import declaration are clear or conditionally cleared by Customs and Border Protection and AQIS but the ICS is awaiting payment.	Yes
\$YNY	The import declaration and cargo report has been cleared by Customs and Border Protection (and awaiting payment). AQIS have cleared the cargo report but have an impediment on the import declaration.	Yes
\$YYN	The import declaration and cargo report has been cleared by Customs and Border Protection (and awaiting payment). AQIS have cleared the import declaration but have an impediment on the cargo report.	Yes
YYNY	The import declaration and cargo report has been cleared by Customs and Border Protection (and paid). AQIS have cleared the cargo report but have an impediment on the import declaration.	Yes
YYYN	The import declaration and cargo report has been cleared by Customs and Border Protection (and paid). AQIS have cleared the import declaration but have an impediment on the cargo report.	Yes
\$NYY	The import declaration is clear (awaiting payment) but the cargo report is not yet cleared by Customs and Border Protection. Further details as to why the cargo report is not clear may be found on the Import Document Status Detail View screen.	No
YNYY	The import declaration is clear and has been paid, but the cargo report is not yet cleared by Customs and Border Protection. Further details as to why the cargo report is not clear may be found on the Import Document Status Detail View screen.	No
NNYY	The import declaration and cargo report have been cleared by AQIS but not by Customs and Border Protection.	No
NNNN	Customs and Border Protection and AQIS have not cleared the cargo.	No
Blank	Import declaration has failed to link to a valid cargo report. This will occur if there is no cargo report, or if the declaration is quoting incorrect cargo report details (e.g. incorrect container number). Further details as to why there isn't a match is provided to the broker in the Information screen.	No