

IMPORTING AND EXPORTING

SHIPPING TO THE U.S. UNDERSTANDING THE KEY PLAYERS

Learn the roles and responsibilities
of key players in the shipping process.

Importing and Exporting

Shipping to the U.S. Roles and responsibilities of key players

As the exporter, when you ship to the U.S., you must rely on others in the supply chain to fulfill their responsibilities in order for your goods to clear Customs. To avoid unpleasant surprises, it pays to know what your partners' roles involve, and what you are responsible (and liable) for.

Importer

The importer is responsible for everything that's declared and filed with U.S. Customs. As such, the importer should obtain all necessary information regarding the shipment/product(s) from you, as the exporter usually has the best knowledge of the product.

The importer must fulfill the following responsibilities:

- Pay all duties and taxes to U.S. Customs
- Provide accurate information to U.S. Customs
- Make available all necessary export and import permits
- Pay any fines or penalties resulting from missing or inaccurate information
- Keep records to substantiate what goods were imported into the U.S., including quantities, prices paid, and the origin of goods. These records must be kept in either paper or electronic format for five years after the goods entered the United States

Exporter

The exporter (in most cases the seller) arranges for transportation of the goods and typically supplies the carrier with customs documentation needed to send the goods to the United States. The information required is conveyed on a standard U.S. Customs pro-forma invoice or a commercial invoice.

Learn about the roles and responsibilities of key players in the process of exporting to the U.S.



The documentation provided by the exporter must include the following information:

- The name and address of the exporter
- The name and address of the producer, if different from the exporter
- The name, address, and Internal Revenue Service (IRS) number of the company where the shipment is to be delivered (consignee/buyer)
- The name, address, and IRS number of the company purchasing product(s), if different from the consignee/buyer
- The product/shipment information including complete description, value, quantity and packing, weight, currency of sale and country of origin
- Any extra documentation such as special permits required by Participating Government Agencies (PGAs)

Carrier

The carrier transports the goods, and is responsible for reporting the shipment to U.S. Customs.

When the shipment arrives at the Canada-U.S. border, the carrier submits the documentation to U.S. Customs and the U.S. customs broker.



Customs broker

The customs broker is a company or individual licensed by U.S. Customs to act as an intermediary between the U.S. government and the importer. The importer has to provide Customs with a legal document called the U.S. Power of Attorney, authorizing the broker to act as the agent.

Customs brokers are responsible for keeping up-to-date on new regulations that may affect the importer, and deal with other customs-related issues, so the importer can focus on their core business.

Customs brokers provide the following services:

- Prepare and present the necessary customs release documents or data required by Customs and PGAs
- Facilitate the release of goods from U.S. Customs custody
- File entry (CF 7501) data/documents with U.S. Customs on behalf of the importer
- Pay duties on behalf of the importer
- Pay carrier charges on behalf of the importer

U.S. Customs and Border Protection

U.S. Customs, also known as Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is the government body that controls cross-border trade into the United States.

Among other responsibilities, U.S. Customs is tasked with the following duties:

- Assessment and collection of customs duties, excise taxes, fees and penalties due on imported merchandise

- The right to deny access, search, seize or request additional information on all goods imported into the United States
- Profile maintenance for all U.S. importers (residents and non-residents). The profile impacts the importer's ability to participate in special U.S. Customs initiatives designed to either simplify or speed up Customs clearance
- Prevention of illegal trade practices, including provisions related to quotas and the marking of imported merchandise, the Anti-Dumping Act, patents and trademarks
- Enforcement of import restrictions and prohibitions
- Accurate collection of import and export data for compilation of international trade statistics.

Confidence comes from knowing

In trade, confidence comes from knowing. When you know who is responsible for each piece of the importing puzzle, you can more effectively deal with problems should they arise.

Contact Livingston

Have questions or need help with your shipments? Contact your account executive, write to us at: simplify@livingstonintl.com or give us a call at **1-800-837-1063**

