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International Trade Data System



ITDS

Message from the Chairman

The ITDS area has seen significant progress over the past several months. The U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) Cargo Control and Release (CCR) Team has been conducting “deep dive” meetings to review and establish system requirements with 16 Participating Government Agencies (PGAs). These “deep dive” working sessions are designed to ensure that the CCR development team can accurately build the functionality presented by the PGAs in their Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) user requirement documents.

The ITDS Board has established a Product Information Committee (PIC) to coordinate efforts in the development of consistent product codes. Mr. Doug Bailey from the Agricultural Marketing Service (AMS) has agreed to chair this committee. The major goals of PIC are to (1) have PGAs document their requirements for the use of specific product codes; (2) ensure that whenever possible, agencies use already existing industry standards for product codes (as directed by Office of Management and Budget (OMB) guidelines) and (3) involve the trade community in the process.

The ITDS Board has also “reactivated” the Data Harmonization Working Group. This working group, which includes members from ITDS PGAs and the ACE Support and Data Harmonization Team, meets on a weekly basis to further refine the Standard Data Set (SDS) definitions to include reviewing the current SDS to remove duplicate data elements, inaccurate or incomplete specified data elements or data elements whose collection has not been previously approved by OMB.

PGAs also participated in the September 2008 Trade Support Network (TSN) plenary session presentations, held in Tyson’s Corner, Va. Dr. Robert Rogowsky and Mr. Paul Mussey gave a demonstration of the new online Harmonized Tariff Schedule (HTS) reference system being introduced by the U.S. International Trade Commission. The Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), U.S. Coast Guard and AMS participated in a panel discussion on their anticipated functionality in the upcoming release for ocean and rail manifest. In addition, several PGAs participated in individual break-out sessions with the trade community to discuss their ACE/ITDS functional integration activities and answer specific questions from the trade. ITDS agencies participating included the Food Safety Inspection Service, National Marine Fisheries Service, Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and APHIS. *(Detailed descriptions on these sessions are also included in this newsletter.)*

Tim Skud
Chairman
ITDS Board of Directors

To submit questions or comments, e-mail askitds@dhs.gov



National Marine Fisheries Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NMFS/NOAA)



NMFS has been very active in the ACE/ITDS program over the past several months. Christopher Rogers, chief of the Trade and Marine Stewardship Division within NOAA Fisheries Office of International Affairs, and John Reghi, special agent, NOAA Fisheries Office of Enforcement, have been actively involved in NOAA/NMFS ITDS/ACE integration activities. Most recently, both Mr. Rogers and Mr. Reghi have been working with the ACE Data Harmonization team that has used NMFS data elements in a prototype for the ITDS Standard Data Set Trade Report. The prototype has been used by the Data Harmonization team in several presentations to the trade community.

Background on NOAA and Marine Fisheries

NOAA Fisheries Service is dedicated to the stewardship of living marine resources through science-based conservation and management and the promotion of healthy ecosystems. As a steward, NOAA Fisheries Service conserves, protects and manages living marine resources in a way that ensures their continuation as functioning components of marine ecosystems and affords economic opportunities while enhancing the quality of life for the American public. Many of these marine resources are shared stocks – transboundary and/or highly migratory – thus international cooperation is necessary to sustain fish populations, restore habitat and recover protected species. The CBP Office of International Affairs participates in multilateral negotiations to establish harvest quotas and fishing protocols to meet stewardship objectives.

Under several domestic laws and a number of international conventions, the United States is obligated to monitor seafood imports to ensure that the product was harvested in a manner that is consistent with conservation and stewardship objectives. Consequently, NMFS must determine that admissibility requirements are met when the product is offered for entry into the U.S. marketplace. These requirements range from legal authorization for the harvesting vessel by its flag state to certification by the vessel captain that certain fishing techniques were used. For example, harvesters must take certain precautions in order to produce canned tuna, which carries the “dolphin-safe” label. In other situations, NMFS must obtain certificates, which establish that the seafood product was harvested within the quotas assigned to a particular country, through the relevant regional fishery management organization. Recognizing that 85 percent of seafood consumed in the United States is imported, the United States can use its market influence to promote marine stewardship worldwide.

What benefits have NOAA and NMFS already seen from participation in ACE/ITDS...

“Access to the ACE portal has improved our ability to evaluate trends and potential problems with seafood imports – ports of entry, tariff code misspecification and lack of proper documentation,” explained Rogers. “It has helped NMFS communicate with the trade community to educate importers and brokers on the documentation requirements.”

What benefits do NOAA/NMFS expect to see in the future from the use of ACE/ITDS...

NMFS anticipates that ITDS integration will result in reduced reporting burden for the trade community, reduced data processing time for government, increased compliance with product admissibility requirements and quicker response time on admissibility decisions.

PGA ACE Ambassador Launch

On Sept. 8 in Tyson’s Corner, Va., 20 employees from 12 PGAs came together for one common goal, to become ambassadors for ACE. “We are a network working together towards educating all ACE users,” said Susan Dyszel, CBP team lead for ITDS during the PGA ACE ambassador training kick-off.

The PGA ACE Ambassador Program is a new, voluntary program managed by the CBP Cargo Systems Program Office (CSPO) communications team and is designed to utilize ITDS agency employees to deliver standard messages about the implementation of ACE capabilities. The ambassadors will also collect feedback from the trade community and other stakeholder groups to gauge the level of understanding and acceptance of ACE.

“The primary goal of the PGA ACE Ambassador Program is to increase ACE awareness within other government agencies and to prepare them for change,” explained Dyszel. As more ACE capabilities are introduced and more government agencies are affected by the system, the PGA ACE Ambassador Program will grow to support expanding information requirements.

“As the face of ACE, the ambassadors’ role is vital to the success of the ACE program,” explained PGA ACE Ambassador Coordinator, Trish Gleason, CBP. By utilizing PGA employees, CSPO aims to foster an understanding of the system throughout the workforce and promote the active participation of employees in implementing and shaping how ACE is adopted by its community of users.

The certification course on Sept. 8 was just the first step in arming these employees with the right tools and information to help them effectively spread the word about ACE within their government agencies and trade communities. For more information on how to become a PGA ACE ambassador or to have an ACE Outreach event within your agency contact AskITDS@dhs.gov.



Certified PGA ACE Ambassadors

APHIS	Sean Blount
APHIS	Simone Dedrick
APHIS	Cornelia Mueller
APHIS	Roberta Zimmerman
Army	Douglas McDonald
ATF	LuAnn Alspach
ATF	Terry Tomlinson
CPSC	John Blachere
CPSC	Jim Joholske
FDA	Mark Gregory
FMCSA	Janet Curtis
FSIS	Alice Howard
FSIS	Dennis Salfrank
FSIS	Robert Simms
FSIS	Kari Skiver
FTZB	Liz Whiteman
NOAA	Christopher Rogers
NRC	Stephen Baker
USDA-AMS	Michiko F. Shaw
USDA/GIPSA	Marianne Plaus

PGA DISCUSSION SESSIONS

TSN PLENARY SESSION — SEPTEMBER 2008

Several PGAs gave presentations and held discussion sessions with the trade community at the September 2008 TSN plenary session in Tyson's Corner, Va. The sessions participation and interaction confirmed the trade communities significant interest in PGA functionality in ACE/ITDS.



ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY (EPA)

Jonathan Jacobson

Jonathan Jacobson, chief, Information Exchange Partnership Branch, Office of Environmental Information (OEI), provided information to the trade community on the status of EPA's integration into ACE/ITDS, the EPA programs that will be involved in ACE and the impact to the trade community. The September 2007 OMB Executive Order, initiated by the Presidential Import Safety Working Group, raised the priority of ACE/ITDS within EPA. OEI was given responsibility to take the lead in getting EPA functionality integrated into ACE/ITDS. EPA is planning to start exchanging data with ACE when CCR modules are deployed. There are currently six EPA programs that are involved in import and export control authority including: 1) Toxic Substances, 2) Pesticides, 3) Hazardous Waste, 4) Ozone Depleting Substances, 5) Vehicles and Engines and 6) Fuels. The goal for EPA is to ensure import safety to protect human health and the environment and to efficiently process documents related to import and export transactions. The benefit to the trade community would be a more automated reporting process to minimize paperwork and the reporting burden associated with that process. It will also facilitate the clearing and admissibility of cargo at the ports.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS)

Sheila Einsweiler



Sheila Einsweiler, senior wildlife inspector, Office of Law Enforcement, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service gave an overview of FWS, its programs, authority, how it will utilize ACE and the impact to the trade community. The mission of FWS is to protect fish, wildlife and plants listed as endangered, threatened or protected under other federal conservation laws and to regulate international trade by establishing requirements for imports and exports of wildlife. The Endangered Species Act and the Lacey Act gives FWS, CBP and the Department of Agriculture broad authority to inspect shipments that are deemed suspicious. Participation in ACE/ITDS will give FWS the ability to communicate with other agencies regarding the clearance of certain shipments, thereby strengthening the ability of FWS to address shipments that attempt to enter or exit ports not staffed by FWS. FWS initially anticipates using the ACE portal to access data and ultimately have an interface with ACE through the FWS electronic filing system (eDecs). eDecs currently allows an importer or exporter to file the FWS Service Declaration electronically at the port where the transaction will occur. Integration in ACE will ultimately provide the trade community with more efficient processing of shipments regulated by FWS.



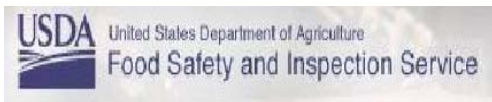
National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)** *Christopher Rogers, John Reghi and Kim Dawson-Gwynn*

Chris Rogers, Trade and Marine Stewardship Division, Office of International Affairs; John Reghi, NOAA Office of Enforcement; and Kim Dawson-Gwynn, Office of International Affairs, provided the comprehensive scope of NMFS authority over marine and fishery services. Operating under the authority of both U.S. domestic law and international treaties, NMFS has trade and enforcement authority regulating the import of seafood into the United States. In 2007, the United States imported 5.3 billion pounds of seafood worth \$13.7 billion and exported 2.9 billion pounds of seafood worth 4.3 billion. Of the seafood consumed in the United States, 85 percent is imported. FWS plans to use ACE/ITDS in automating its importer blanket permit process and the entry certificate or document process. These permits will be electronically filed through ACE allowing FWS to determine admissibility and provide preapproval required for release.

Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) *Cornelia Mueller and Cheryl Berthoud*



Cornelia Mueller, ITDS operations manager, and Cheryl Berthoud, veterinary medical officer, provided the trade with a detailed overview of the authority and responsibility of APHIS. APHIS is responsible for developing agricultural regulations, policies and guidelines for the import of all animal- and plant-related products. APHIS currently has 115 personnel with access to the ACE portal, including entomologists, pest survey specialists, plant specialists, animal disease and plant disease specialists and veterinarians. APHIS currently uses ACE to make quarantine decisions on imported products, recall animal and plant products, investigate trade compliance issues and other trade transaction risks. Benefits to the trade community resulting from APHIS' use of ACE/ITDS include: the facilitation of trade, providing stakeholders with additional information on issues APHIS may have with their products and establishing a more automated platform for government-to-government transmissions.



Food Safety and Inspection Service (FSIS)

Mary Stanley, Office of International Affairs, provided information to the trade community on the FSIS Import Safety program and how their programs will be integrated in ACE/ITDS. The FSIS program has authority over the import of meat, poultry and egg products into the United States. The importer must file entries with CBP, which completes the agriculture checks for restricted products and conditionally releases all shipments to FSIS for re-inspection to ensure that public health and safety is protected. FSIS has 70 import inspectors stationed at 140 official import establishments. FSIS uses the Automated Import Information System to verify eligibility, assign inspection assignments, and to store inspection results. Any data exchange of FSIS inspection results between CBP and FSIS at this time is manual. This current data system is being enhanced to enable FSIS to transmit and receive electronic certificates between foreign inspection systems and to verify the shipment entry data filed in ACE. Future FSIS interface with ACE: 1) will provide advance notice of arriving shipments ensuring control of ineligible products into the U.S.; 2) will allow the use of new product classification to enhance HTS which will ensure amenable shipments are properly directed to FSIS; 3) will enhance communication between federal agencies and 4) will incorporate FSIS inspection depositions within CBP release. This will provide for more efficient inspection, verification and release by FSIS systems at the ports.

Robert Berczik, Office of International Affairs, provided input to the trade community on the FSIS Import Control process. FSIS takes enforcement action when importers fail to present eligible meat, poultry and egg products for inspection after their release by CBP, when imported products arrive at the Port from ineligible sources and when the product fails inspection and is refused entry. ACE/ITDS has provided FSIS personnel access to the ACE portal to allow FSIS to query ACE and target suspicious consignments for potential enforcement action. ACE portal access is a bridge to a permanent electronic interface between CBP and FSIS and will facilitate import commerce by reducing the paperwork burden associated with FSIS-regulated products.