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**UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE**  
**Economics and Statistics Administration**  
**U.S. Census Bureau**  
Washington, DC 20233-0001

**FTR Letter No. 2**

MEMORANDUM FOR U.S. Customs Service Headquarters, Directors of Field Operations, Port Directors, Foreign Trade Zone Operators, U.S. Department of Commerce District Offices, U.S. Principal Parties in Interest (USPPI), Freight Forwarders, Exporting Carriers, Consolidators, U.S. Customs Brokers, and All Others Concerned

From: <sup>for</sup> William G. Bostic, Jr. <sup>DCO</sup>  
Chief, Foreign Trade Division (FTD)

Subject: Reuse of the Shipment Reference Number

This letter clarifies the Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR) requirement for the shipment reference number reported in the Automated Export System (AES). As specified in the FTR, Section 30.6 (a) (19), the shipment reference number is a unique identification number assigned by the filer that allows for the identification of the shipment in the filer's system. Currently, the number must be unique for five years.

Recently, AES filers attempted to reuse the shipment reference numbers following the five year period. An analysis of the AES revealed that the system was not configured to allow the reuse of the shipment reference numbers. A complete redesign of the system would be required to add this capability.

Therefore, we have determined based on the reasons noted above, that reuse of the shipment reference number is prohibited. Once the number has been assigned by the filer, the filer cannot assign that same shipment reference number to future shipments.

Every effort must be made by the USPPI and authorized agents to comply with this requirement. If you have questions concerning this requirement, please contact the Regulations, Outreach, and Education Branch, FTD on 1-800-549-0595, option 3.