

# AES Newsletter

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## *The Foreign Trade Division presents...*

### **The Fundamentals of Exporting**

Created by the **Foreign Trade Division of the U.S. Census Bureau**, this **free** in-depth webinar series provides the tools necessary for a strong foundation in the fundamentals of exporting.

*Do you want to learn how to classify your products?  
Are you overwhelmed by the terminology and regulations?  
Or are you just wondering where to start?*

#### **The Fundamentals of Exporting has a webinar for you!**

Designed with the beginner in mind, this diverse eight-part series provides an essential roadmap to assist you in making effective decisions for your individual export strategy.

The first five webinars were presented in July, August, and early September 2012; these have been archived and may be viewed at [www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/news\\_conferences/webinars\\_exporting.html](http://www.census.gov/newsroom/releases/archives/news_conferences/webinars_exporting.html)

#### **Archived Webinars:**

- *Understanding the Basics—An Introduction to Foreign Trade Statistics*
- *Discovering New Markets—Utilizing USA Trade Online*
- *All Products Have a Classification Number—Learn How to Find Yours*
- *Foreign Trade Regulations—Demystifying the Rules of Exporting*
- *Filing Export Information Electronically—The ABCs of AES*

#### **Upcoming Webinars:**

- **Your Free Tools of Trade—AESDirect and AESPcLink** (September 19, 2012). Get the most out of these free shipment management tools
- **Getting it Right the First Time—How to Avoid Common Penalties** (October 3, 2012). Escape common errors by making the right decisions regarding your export shipments from day one.
- **What is a Foreign Trade Zone and How Can It Help You?** (October 17, 2012). Learn about the advantages of Foreign Trade Zones (FTZs) and how FTZs benefit U.S. businesses.

*Stay tuned for broadcast messages from the U.S. Census Bureau for instructions to sign up for the next webinar.*

For more information about **The Fundamentals of Exporting**, contact the Foreign Trade Division at 301-763-2311 or [fd.data.dissemination@census.gov](mailto:fd.data.dissemination@census.gov).



## Your Guide to Shipment Reference Numbers

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by Nidaal Jubran, Automated Export System Branch

The Automated Export System (AES) requires that each individual Electronic Export Information (EEI) record be assigned a **unique** Shipment Reference Number (SRN). A common misconception is that this requirement expires after five years, and you may then use a previously assigned SRN for a new shipment. This is incorrect; the SRN may **never** be used more than once, regardless of how much time has passed between shipment dates.

On September 26, 2008, the U.S. Census Bureau published Foreign Trade Regulations (FTR) Letter No. 2, which explains that filers may not repeat previously used SRNs. A full copy of this document can be found at [Reuse of the Shipment Reference Number](#).

### What is the Shipment Reference Number?

The SRN is a unique 17-character alphanumeric identification number assigned to each shipment by the filer. It is used to track shipments in the AES and to track shipments for retrieval, correction, and deletion.

### When should I create a unique Shipment Reference Number?

A unique SRN must be created at the time of filing for each new shipment.

Once the filer has assigned a particular SRN to a shipment, that number cannot be re-used for future shipments. Doing so may result in the replacement of all original shipment EEI with new shipment data, resulting in loss of the original shipment information. Removing previous shipment data, especially for shipments whose cargo has moved out under an Internal Transaction Number (ITN), will cause incorrect export data, along with documentation problems if the original shipment is audited or otherwise investigated.

### What sort of logic can I use to keep track of many SRNs?

To avoid confusion, it is a good practice to establish a pattern of creating SRNs in a way that makes sense for you or your company. You should also maintain a log of SRNs that have already been used in order to prevent duplication as well as for easy retrieval in the future.

For instance, if a company sends 100 records per month to the AES, each one of the records must have a unique SRN. Let us call this filer the ABC Company. With such a large volume of data, it is

important that these SRNs follow some sort of logical pattern.

ABC Company might want to establish a basic format for their SRNs, and leave the last few characters for customization in order to ensure that each SRN is unique.

A good format and logic can be as simple as 'ABCMMYYXXX,' where:

ABC = Abbreviated name for the company (not unique)

MM = Two-digit month of filing (not unique)

YY = Two-digit year of filing (not unique)

XXX = Sequential identification number for this particular record (unique)

Following this logic, a few SRNs for shipments filed in May 2012 might look like this: ABC0512001, ABC0512002, ABC0512003, etc. Thus, each shipment has a unique SRN.

### When should I use the same Shipment Reference Number?

The only time an SRN may be reused is when a correction or deletion is made to an existing shipment. For instance, if ABC Company creates a record in the AES for a shipment leaving from Baltimore, MD, but the arrangements change and the shipment actually leaves from Newark, NJ, then the filer must retrieve this shipment data and make the correction to the same shipment, using the same SRN. Because a new shipment is NOT being created, the ITN will remain the same during this transaction.

### I'm not sure if my Shipment Reference Number has been used before. Will the system warn me if my Shipment Reference Number is not unique?

The AES*Direct* application is programmed to prompt users if they are about to replace the shipment information of a previously used SRN.

### What if I accidentally submit a new shipment under a previous SRN?

If a filer mistakenly reports a new shipment as a "correction record" under a previously used SRN, all prior data for that shipment reference number will be replaced (overwritten). For example, if ABC Company sends a shipment through the AES today but enters an SRN that was used in a previous

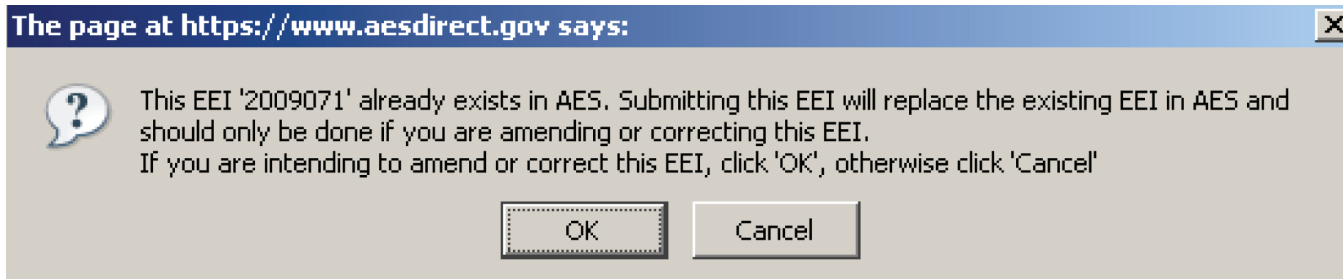
shipment in 2009, then a new shipment will not be created. Instead, the data that was transmitted originally in 2009 will be replaced with the data sent today. A new ITN will not be generated and the filer will receive the same ITN that was generated for this shipment in 2009.

The format of the ITN is XYYYYMMDDNNNNNN, where Y is the four-digit year, M is the two-digit month, D is the two-digit day, and N is a six-digit number generated by the AES. For example, an EEI filed on May 26, 2009 might have the ITN of X20090526345678.

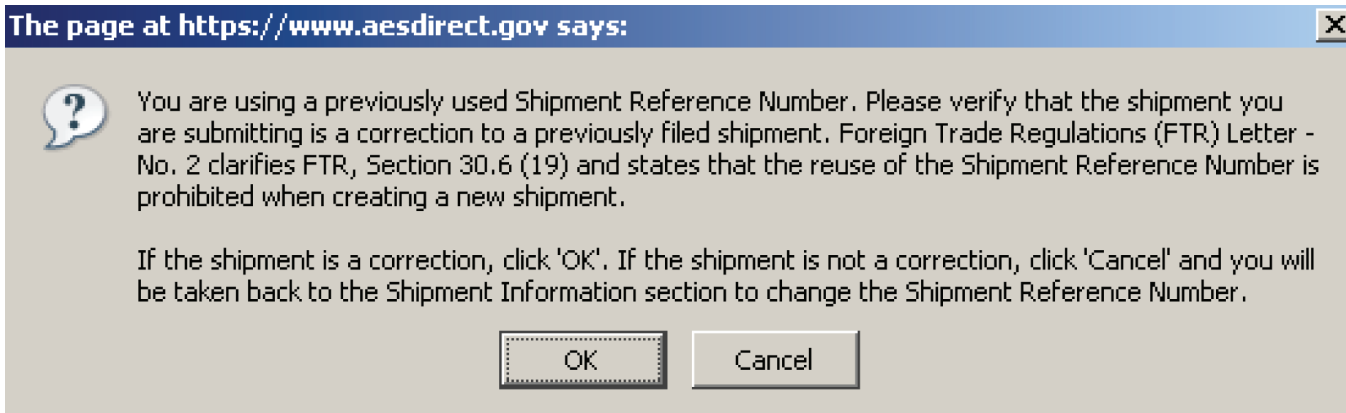
This type of mistake creates a bit of work for ABC Company, because additional steps must be taken to resolve the issue. The filer must restore this shipment data back to its original state prior to the correction. For this reason, it is a good practice to retain all invoices, documents and related paperwork associated with each shipment. Once the shipment data has been corrected and the EEI reflects the original filing, the filer must create a new shipment with a unique SRN.

If you have additional questions about the SRN, please call 800-549-0595, Option 1, or send an e-mail to [askaes@census.gov](mailto:askaes@census.gov).

**The first AESDirect prompt indicates:**



**The second AESDirect prompt indicates:**



## Is 95% Compliance Good Enough?

by Keith Jones, Automated Export System Branch

### Short answer—NO!

The U.S. Census Bureau's Foreign Trade Division (FTD) calculates your AES Compliance Rate, based on the number of AES Compliance Alerts and unresolved AES Fatal Errors received from the past month. The AES Compliance Rate reflects your ability to comply with the AES reporting requirements and from time to time, the AES Branch and/or an official from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) may contact you about late shipments, other compliance alerts, or fatal errors.

"95% Compliance" means that, on average, 19 of 20 export shipments during the past month did not generate an AES Compliance Alert message and the filer did not have any unresolved AES Fatal Errors. However, the one individual shipment that is out of compliance may be subject to fines, penalties, and seizures.

The most common AES Compliance Alert is "Shipment Reported Late." In addition, the response codes shown in the table at the top of page 5 are also factored into the calculation of your AES Compliance Rate.

Unresolved AES Fatal Errors also adversely affect your AES Compliance Rate. These include Electronic Export Information (EEI) transmissions that were rejected by AES and not corrected under the same Shipment Reference Number (SRN), as well as fatal errors that could not be corrected by the filer.

Conditions that preclude filer correction may include pending CBP actions, trying to correct/replace a previously cancelled SRN, and other reasons. Unresolved AES Fatal Errors are recycled each month until resolved by filer correction or AES client representative suppression and will continue to lower your AES Compliance Rate until corrected or suppressed.

Corrections result from filer actions; the most typical correction is when the filer retrieves the shipment, makes changes in the EEI, and resubmits the shipment information. If you, as the filer, cannot correct the error, then please contact the AES Branch. We have an entire team to help with rejected EEI that cannot be resolved by the filer.

### To maintain a high compliance rate, filers should:

1. Make sure AES Compliance Reports and AES Fatal Error Reports are sent to the appropriate person in the company.
2. Minimize the total number of monthly AES Compliance Alerts.
3. Monitor and resolve outstanding AES Fatal Errors as soon as they are received.
4. [Properly suppress](#) or resubmit rejected shipments.
5. Become familiar with "[Appendix A—Commodity Filing Response Messages](#)."

Please understand that your AES Compliance Rate does not reflect the accuracy of your reporting! For example, if something is wrong with any shipment, such as an inaccurate commodity classification number, the wrong parties to the transactions, incorrect port codes or other information, CBP investigators or other federal law enforcement personnel may contact you. In addition, you and other parties to the export transaction could be subject to fines and penalties after CBP's investigation.

So you're wondering if your AES Compliance Rate is important? Yes, because it reflects your ability to report your shipments in compliance with the Foreign Trade Regulations, which means that you must file the EEI and receive an Internal Transaction Number (ITN) confirmation according to the requirements published in the [Foreign Trade Regulations \(FTR\), 15 CFR Part 30](#).

What's the bottom line? Your AES Compliance Rate reflects the timeliness and accuracy of your EEI reporting and timely resolution of your AES Fatal Errors. You must consider all aspects of compliance outside of your AES Compliance Rate, including any corresponding legal requirements, federal agency regulations, CBP port procedures, and international issues that may apply.

For more information, see the [AES Compliance Report Details](#). If you have further questions about the AES Compliance Rate, please call 800-549-0595, option 1 for the AES Help Desk.

<b>Response Code</b>	<b>Narrative Text</b>
076	USPPI Changed Post-Departure
700	Shipment Reported Late; Opt 2
701	Shipment Reported Late; Opt 4
702	Line Activity Add Post Departure
703	Line Activity Deleted Post Departure
704	License Type Change Post Departure
705	License Number Change Post Departure
706	Licensable Value Change Post Departure
707	Used Vehicle(s) Change Post Departure

### **What Should I Use For the Carrier Code?**

*by Eric Gauthier, Automated Export System Branch*

One of the fields you are required to report within your Electronic Export Information is the Carrier Code. The carrier code field is mandatory if the mode of transport is air, truck, rail, or vessel. In those cases, you will need to provide either a Standard Carrier Alpha Code (SCAC) or International Air Transport Association (IATA) code. The SCAC is a unique four-letter code issued by the National Motor Freight Traffic Association (NMFTA) and used to identify transportation companies when the mode of transportation used is rail, truck or vessel. The IATA issues codes that are two to three characters (either numbers or letters) and used by air transportation companies.

In most situations, the carrier company that you are using should provide the code that you would need to use for the shipment. If you do not have the code available, both *AESDirect* and *AESpLink* provide you with a lookup feature that allows you to search for carrier codes by the company's name. Once you identify a code, you should verify with the carrier company if the code selected is appropriate for that company.

In some situations, however, a carrier code, especially for rail, truck or vessel transportation, is not listed in the system, even though you know the carrier has one available. Do not enter an unlisted code, because AES will reject it if it is not in the code table. Please ask the carrier to contact the Automated Export System (AES) Branch to request that the code be added to the database.

To complete the process, the carrier should send a copy of the carrier code approval letter from IATA or NMFTA, including a valid expiration date, to the AES Branch, by fax to 301-763-6638 (ATTN: AES Branch) or by e-mail attachment to [askaes@census.gov](mailto:askaes@census.gov). Once received, the staff will verify the information and send a request to our developers to add the code to the AES reference tables.

If you need more details or have any questions regarding the carrier codes, please contact the AES Branch at 800-549-0595, Option 1 or by e-mail at [askaes@census.gov](mailto:askaes@census.gov).

#### **Carrier SCAC/IATA and Conveyance Name Fields on *AESDirect***

The screenshot shows a web interface with a light green background. On the left, there are two labels: "Carrier SCAC/IATA (L) [Help]" and "Conveyance Name". To the right of the first label is a text input field, a "Lookup" button, and two links: "[SCAC Table]" and "[IATA Table]". Below the second label is another text input field.

# INSPIRE ACTION

Take the 2012 FTD Customer Service Survey!

**REGULATIONS,  
OUTREACH AND  
EDUCATION  
BRANCH**



**AESDirect  
Help desk**

**Commodity Analysis  
Branch**

**Automated Export  
System Branch**

The 2012 Foreign Trade Division Customer Service Survey gives you the opportunity to voice your opinion and provide feedback regarding the AES support tools and services. The survey will be available in October. Please send an email to [FTD2012Survey@census.gov](mailto:FTD2012Survey@census.gov) to participate to participate.

## CONTACT INFORMATION

**Foreign Trade Division Call Center**  
**800-549-0595** (see menu options in the table below)  
**\*SECURE FAX: 301-763-8835** (all branches)

<p><b>Automated Export System Branch, Option 1</b></p> <p>Monday–Friday  7:30 a.m.–5:30 p.m. (Eastern Time)  Fax: 301-763-6638  E-mail: <a href="mailto:askaes@census.gov">askaes@census.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Commodity Analysis Branch, Option 2</b></p> <p>Monday–Friday  8:00 a.m.–5:30 p.m. (Eastern Time)  Fax: 301-763-4962  E-mail: <a href="mailto:ftd.scheduleb@census.gov">ftd.scheduleb@census.gov</a></p>
<p><b>Regulations, Outreach, and Education Branch, Option 3</b></p> <p>Monday–Friday  7:30 a.m.–6:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)  Fax: 301-763-4610  E-mail: <a href="mailto:ftdregs@census.gov">ftdregs@census.gov</a></p>	<p><b>Data Dissemination Branch, Option 4</b></p> <p>Monday–Friday  8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)  Fax: 301-763-4962  E-mail: <a href="mailto:ftd.data.dissemination@census.gov">ftd.data.dissemination@census.gov</a></p>

\*The secure fax number is for confidential company information (i.e., data requests). Please include a cover sheet with the name and/or branch phone number to whom the fax should be delivered. The e-mail addresses below are not secure. Confidential company information should not be sent to these addresses.

### AESDirect Technical Support (toll-free)

Every day, 7:00 a.m.–7:00 p.m. (Eastern Time)	Voice: 877-715-4433
E-mail: <a href="mailto:boc-support@tradeagate2000.com">boc-support@tradeagate2000.com</a>	Fax: 301-562-7795

AES Partnership Agencies	Web sites
<p><b>U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)</b>  Trade Enforcement and Facilitation  For questions regarding CBP, ITAR, and  Used Vehicles contact:  Robert Rawls, Program Manager, 202-344-2847  E-mail: <a href="mailto:robert.rawls@dhs.gov">robert.rawls@dhs.gov</a> or  <a href="mailto:manifest.branch@dhs.gov">manifest.branch@dhs.gov</a></p> <p><b>Bureau of Industry and Security (BIS)</b>  Help Desk, Washington, DC  202-482-4933  Western Regional Office,  Los Angeles/Newport Beach, CA  949-660-0144  Western Regional Office,  San Jose, CA  408-351-3378</p> <p><b>Directorate of Defense Trade Controls</b>  U.S. State Department, Washington, DC  Response Team  202-663-1282  D-Trade Questions  202-663-2838</p>	<p><b>U.S. Census Bureau, Foreign Trade</b>  <a href="http://www.census.gov/trade">www.census.gov/trade</a></p> <p><b>U.S. Customs and Border Protection</b>  <a href="http://www.cbp.gov">www.cbp.gov</a></p> <p><b>Bureau of Industry and Security</b>  <a href="http://www.bis.doc.gov">www.bis.doc.gov</a></p> <p><b>U.S. State Department, Directorate of Defense Trade Controls</b>  <a href="http://www.pmdtcc.state.gov">www.pmdtcc.state.gov</a></p> <p><b>U.S. Treasury Department, Office of Foreign Assets Control</b>  <a href="http://www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac">www.treas.gov/offices/enforcement/ofac</a></p>