

Simplified Entry Pilot

Frequently Asked Questions: Policy

Last Updated: August 2012



**U.S. Customs and
Border Protection**

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General

1. **Can Automated Broker Interface (ABI) software providers participate in the test for the Simplified Entry or be used to perform tests through a user?**

While not official test participants, software vendors play a critical role supporting the filers who are or will be part of the Pilot. Any requests by these vendors to participate can be forwarded to CBP's training office to determine if the software providers can be utilized for training purposes.

2. **Is there an option for a participant to discontinue their involvement in the Pilot after previously being accepted?**

CBP is committed to working with Pilot participants to ensure their participation is constructive and beneficial. If participants face any challenges to participating, CBP will work with them to address and resolve the issue. However, if a participant wishes, they can discontinue their involvement in the Pilot.

3. **Can a Simplified Entry be modified while in transit?**

Under the Pilot, CBP will allow filers to modify entry data electronically to allow the Trade to update for the best available information, up until time of the arrival of the conveyance.

4. **How does Simplified Entry streamline the entry process?**

Simplified Entry streamlines the entry process by separating the collection of the shipment data and the transportation data. The carrier submits the manifest/Air Cargo Advanced Screening (ACAS) security filing (as appropriate), and the broker or importer/self filer submits the Simplified Entry data set. The result is that instead of filling out 27 data fields and waiting until manifest information from the carrier is available to include on the entry, brokers or importers/self filers can submit the entry at any time prior to arrival in the United States, and are only required to submit 12 data elements (plus three optional ones).

5. **What is the difference between the correction process for entries today and the Simplified Entry correction process?**

Filers can update the CBP Form 3461 today but Simplified Entry allows the data to be updated for a longer period of time. Currently, outside of Simplified Entry, once CBP takes "control" of the entry submission, the trade is unable to make changes, even if the goods have not yet arrived. With Simplified Entry, the entry data can be updated up until the arrival of the goods.

6. **By how much is Simplified Entry expected to reduce cost and time?**

Under Simplified Entry, an importer can file an entry far in advance of a shipment and receive a release indication on its cargo much earlier than under the current entry process. For example, one of the pilot participants was able to file a Simplified Entry and receive a message four days prior to the departure of the shipment from Hong Kong. The ability to file the Simplified Entry as early as the information is available provides the filer with the flexibility to manage their workflow. This expanded window of time also allows the importer to resolve any issues with CBP before they result in a delay, saving time and money for the trade.

7. Will Simplified Entry data be included in ACE Cargo Entry reports?

In Phase One of the Simplified Entry Pilot Simplified Entries will not be included in the Aggregate and Detail Cargo Entry reports and the AD-003 Cargo Entry Extract Report.

Today Cargo Entry reports exclude rail Line Release, Border Release Advance Screening and Selectivity (BRASS) and Free and Secure Trade (FAST) entries. Entry summary reports will not be impacted by Simplified Entry.

8. Is this a paperless program, and if so, how will I get my cargo released from a warehouse, such as a consolidated freight station (CFS)?

As this is a paperless program there will be no submissions of CBP Form 3461. Simplified Entry will only be accepted electronically in the Automated Cargo Environment (ACE). In order to foster a truly paperless program, CBP will not be creating courtesy copies or stamping forms. However, CBP recognizes that a paperless environment will pose challenges to non-automated entities, such as consolidated freight stations and terminals that do not receive electronic releases from CBP.

Consequently, in the interim, CBP will allow non-automated facilities to release cargo based upon screen printouts presented to them by filers (importers, brokers, etc.). This printout will have, at a minimum, the shipment ID and quantity being released, the type of release, as well as clear identification of who presented the release information (such as a cover letter). For audit purposes, this will satisfy due diligence on behalf of the non-automated facility.

In the event that cargo that is either on hold or is not released by CBP is allowed to exit a non-automated facility, CBP will seek remedy with the party that provided the "release" to that facility. Record retention guidelines will also apply. It is also important to note that this is an interim process, and that in order to effectively operate in an increasingly paperless environment, non-automated facilities are strongly encouraged to automate.

9. Can an entry number be used again if the Simplified Entry has been deleted?

The entry number cannot be used again for Simplified Entry since it will be reflected as being in deleted status.

10. Can the filer update the port of entry under Simplified Entry?

The Port of Entry is not a mandatory data element in the Simplified Entry data set. Port of Entry information is provided on the manifest and changes to that information will occur as they do today.

11. Are Manufacturer IDs (MIDs) going away?

The MID will be calculated by the Simplified Entry system based on the information on the commercial parties identified in the SE submission. For Simplified Entry trade will no longer provide the MID, just the name and address of the commercial parties.

12. Does the Simplified Entry Process result in less data available to CBP than the current entry process?

The intent is to reduce duplicate requests for information from the trade. Once CBP combines the data from the Simplified Entry and the manifest, CBP has the same information that it gets today.

13. What is the definition of 'buyer'?

The definitions for the data elements in the Simplified Entry are the same as those used in the Importer Security Filing. The 'buyer' is the last known entity to whom the goods are sold or agreed to be sold.

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Federal Register Notices (FRN)

1. **How many Federal Register Notices (FRNs) have been published to date on the Simplified Entry Pilot?**

To date, CBP has published two FRNs related to Simplified Entry. The first Notice, announcing the Pilot test and requesting volunteer participants, was published on November 9, 2011 (see 76 FR 69755). The second Notice, announcing expansion of the Pilot, was published on August 14, 2012 (see 77 FR 48527).

2. **Can importers who do not self-file participate in the Pilot?**

Importers who do not self-file can express interest in the pilot; however, the importer must be working with a broker that was selected by CBP as an official Pilot participant. Furthermore, the importer must also meet all other relevant requirements outlined in the Simplified Entry FRNs (see 76 FR 69755, published November 9, 2011 and 77 FR 48527, published August 14, 2012).

3. **When will Remote Location Filing (RLF) entries be allowed in the Pilot? What is CBP's vision for allowing remote filing of Simplified Entries?**

RLF will not be included in the initial Pilot or first expansion of the pilot; however, CBP is working to include RLF in future Pilot deployments.

4. **What are the criteria CBP will use to select Pilot participants?**

All applicants will be reviewed for the basic requirements outlined in the first FRN and subsequently modified in the FRN announcing expansion of the Pilot. The criteria are as follows:

- a. Applicant type (must be self-filing importer or broker)
- b. Must be Customers-Trade Partnership Against Terrorism (C-TPAT) Tier 2 or Tier 3 for self-filing importers/ C-TPAT-Certified for brokers [NOTE: the C-TPAT status of an importer for whom a customs broker files a Simplified Entry is no longer an eligibility criterion]
- c. Applicant must have an Automated Commercial Environment (ACE) portal account
- d. Applicant must intend to file ACE Entry Summaries
- e. Applicant must have ABI certification

CBP will analyze the applicant universe against previous trade volumes and expected shipments through the pilot phases. Preference will be given to the time and date the applicant's submitted their information. CBP will evaluate applicants that filed 2,000 or more entries in Fiscal Year 2011, an average of 160 entries a month, to substantiate a robust testing of the system. CBP will compile the results and make selections for the Simplified Entry pilot, organized by large, medium and small entities, according to the number of entries filed per year:

5. **Who were the initial Pilot participants?**

CBP announced the initial Pilot participants via a [press release](#) as well as at the [December 7, 2011 Commercial Operations Advisory Committee \(COAC\) meeting](#).

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Pilot Requirements

1. **What are the airports that CBP plans to utilize for the Simplified Entry Pilot? Can additional airports be used?**

The initial three Pilot ports selected were Atlanta, Chicago and Indianapolis. CBP is currently in the process of expanding to additional ports. Updated information on the expansion can be found on the Trade Transformation website.

http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/trade_transformation/simplified_entry/

2. **Can filers participate in the Pilot if their shipments have other government agency requirements?**

For the initial Pilot, CBP will only allow Entry Types 01 and 11 that do not have other government agency requirements. In future Pilot deployments, CBP anticipates incorporating the Participating Government Agency (PGA) message set. This was developed by CBP in October 2011, and is a single, harmonized set of data elements that will be collected electronically from international traders by CBP on behalf of the PGAs, thereby allowing CBP and the PGAs to make informed decisions about what cargo can come into the U.S. without the myriad of paper forms currently required.

3. **Will it be required that all entries shipped under an Employer Identification Number (EIN) be filed using Simplified Entries?**

The Pilot participants will be able to identify and limit the scope based on their business processes. Pilot participants can determine what shipments should be filed as Simplified Entries (that meet the specific Pilot requirements as outlined in the FRN), or as standard CBP Form 3461 entries.

4. **Will the brokers who are Pilot participants be limited to submitting Simplified Entries for those importers who are C-TPAT certified?**

No. Pilot participants may file a Simplified Entry on behalf of any of their importers as long as the shipments fall within the parameters of the Pilot.

5. **Will C-TPAT be an ongoing requirement to participate in Simplified Entry?**

The requirement for C-TPAT certification for brokers participating in Simplified Entry is **only** for purposes of the Pilot. In addition, Pilot filers can file Simplified Entries on behalf of **any importer** if their shipment meets the pilot criteria. The intention for the future is that the ACE Simplified Entry/Cargo Release process will be expanded to importers and brokers regardless of C-TPAT status.

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Additional Pilot Capabilities/Participants

1. **What is CBP's plan to add participants to Simplified Entry?**

CBP will continue to expand participation in the Simplified Entry Pilot. Subsequent notices will be published in the Federal Register regarding future Pilot deployments, expansion of participation in the Pilot, testing of additional modes of transportation and the addition of enhanced system capabilities.

2. **What are the next steps for Simplified Entry now that the initial filings have taken place?**

The initial evaluation of the Simplified Entry Pilot will begin in late August. CBP and the Pilot participants are currently testing additional scenarios as well as putting more volume in the system. Next steps include expansion to additional ports and participants. In addition, CBP is working on adding new functionality such as the Participating Government Agency (PGA) Message Set and the Document Image System (DIS).

3. **What is the plan for expanding to additional ports and when will that happen?**

Based on the success of the Simplified Entry pilot, CBP will be deploying Simplified Entry to additional airports using a regional approach. Seattle is scheduled to receive their first Simplified Entry on August 14, 2012. San Francisco and Oakland are scheduled to receive their first Simplified Entries later that week with Los Angeles to follow the week of August 20th. During the week of September 10, 2012, Simplified Entry will expand to airports in the south/southeast including Dallas/Ft. Worth, Houston and Miami. Simplified Entry will expand to airports in the northeast including Newark, New York/JFK and Boston the week of September 17, 2012.

4. **What is CBPs plan for expanding to other modes of transportation?**

CBP plans to move to the ocean mode of transportation next. Planning for determining the timeline for this is currently underway and will take into consideration the M1 rollout, so as not to impact that effort.

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