

Steel License Program, Electronic Newsletter



The purpose of this newsletter is to reinforce the Import Administration – Steel License Team commitment to customer service to the steel importing community. Specifically, we want to communicate any changes to the license system, steel license program, and other items of interest on a quarterly basis in an attempt to make the program as least burdensome as possible.

US Customs Publishes Final Rule

On March 21, 2003, US Customs published their final rule in the Federal Register for safeguard provisions for certain steel products that require a steel license. The final rule can be found at the Steel Import Licensing Website:

<http://ia.ita.doc.gov/steel/license/03-6757.txt>

Data Quality: Matching Steel License Data with Customs Entry Summaries

With over 50,000 licenses issued and over two full months of issuing licenses, the emphasis of the Steel Team has shifted from launching the license system to ensuring that the data collected is consistent with program requirements. To accomplish this, we have begun weekly audits with the cooperation of US Customs and have already contacted over 200 registered users concerning license discrepancies. While the legal framework exists for enforcement, we are most interested in collecting quality data to fulfill our objectives. Some of the more frequent discrepancies include:

- ☞ Weight and value on license not matching Customs entry data
- ☞ Country of origin and export on license not matching Customs entry data
- ☞ One license number used for multiple entries

We ask that when applying for a license, please ensure that the information you provide is correct and accurate to the best of your knowledge.

Additional Exclusions of 295 Products

☞ The Department of Commerce (DOC) and the Office of the United States Trade Representative (USTR) announced a new set of products to be excluded from the steel safeguard remedy on March 21, 2003. This announcement concludes the review of all pending exclusion requests; the process will begin again in November 2003 to submit exclusion requests for consideration by March 2004. A list and short description of the excluded products may be found on USTR's website: www.ustr.gov.

☞ These 295 exclusions have led to 220 new 9903 codes in Field #20 of the DOC steel license application (some of these exclusions were bundled together in the same 9903 code).

License System Outage

On two separate occasions, March 17 & 25, the license system was seriously impaired because of server difficulties. While some people were able to apply for licenses after a long wait, most people were not able to apply for a license at all. On the second occasion, we sent an e-mail to all registered users addressing the problem. Since then, we have implemented a policy that if there is a disruption in service that lasts more than two hours we will send an e-mail explaining the difficulties. We regret if there have been times that you may not have been able to get a license instantaneously. In the event of future disruptions in the system, we will work expeditiously to resume regular service and communicate alternative options to our customers.

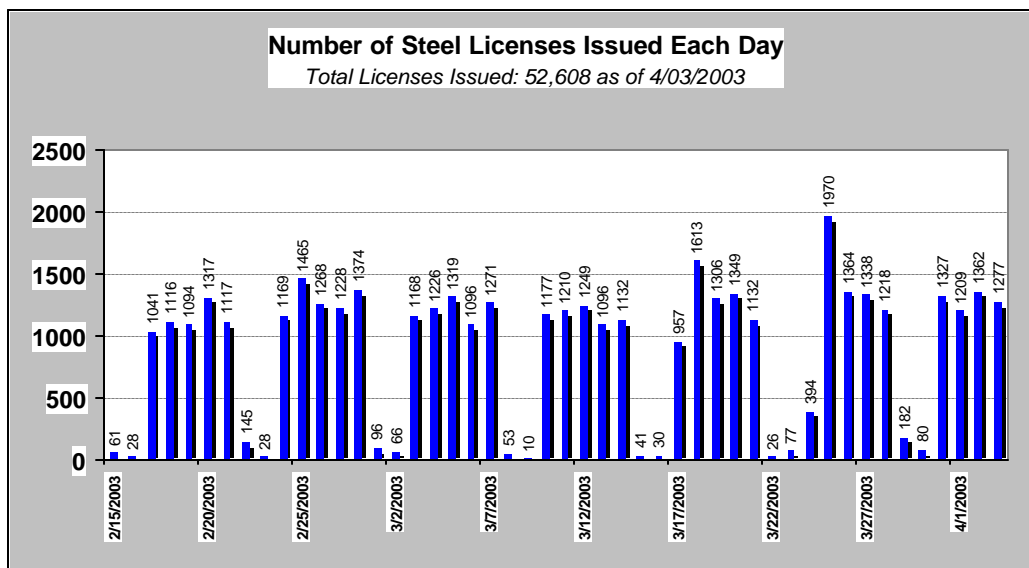
Expanded Surge Monitor Soon to be Launched

We are currently in the process of fine-tuning our programs in order to launch the Expanded Surge Monitor. This will be up-to-date aggregate volume, average unit value of import data, and statistics on steel imports. What's most exciting about this new function, is that the programs have the ability to sort massive amounts of information and present it based on individual user specifications, while providing near real-time results (or at least weekly updates). In order to achieve this, we must reconcile both ACS and license data by license number and HTS code to identify discrepancies that would skew the results. Our goal is to present the most accurate data to our audience, however the data from the license system (collected from the steel

import community) is preliminary and could be subject to revisions. Stay tuned!!

License Statistics – F.Y.I.

- 52,608 licenses issued as of April 3, 2003
- 1710 registered users
- The overall weekly average of steel license applications 4,735
- Daily average of 1,200 licenses issued per day
- License Team has responded to over 1500 e-mails



As always, we encourage you to respond with your ideas and suggestions.

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