



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

OCT 15 2008

Mr. Sean Duffy Sr.
President
National Association of Maritime Organizations
3939 N. Causeway Blvd.
Suite 102
Metairie, LA 70002

Dear Mr. Duffy:

As you already know, U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) and the National Association of Maritime Organizations (NAMO) have begun to develop a strong working relationship to resolve maritime related issues. The willingness of CBP and NAMO to work together in partnership is a great example of government and industry working together to achieve common goals.

In our past meetings and discussions, NAMO members have expressed their frustration with the current process of submitting a hard copy of the departure I-418 manifest, as well as the fines that are initiated by Ports of Entry (POE) for failure to comply with statute and regulation that delineate the process. I would like to personally assure you that CBP has acknowledged these concerns. CBP is actively exploring possible avenues to automate the I-418 manifest and eliminate the requirement to submit this form in hard copy. CBP welcomes the suggestions and input of your members as we develop a pilot program to test a possible alternative to the current procedure. In the interim, CBP, in an attempt to streamline our process at seaport POEs, has evaluated our procedure and has issued the following guidance to the field:

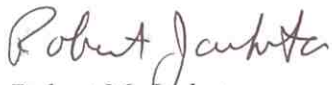
- Arrival manifests for crew are to be maintained by CBP at the seaport of entry for six months.
- If the departure manifest is not received within 30-60 days of the vessel's arrival, the CBP seaport of arrival shall contact the CBP seaport of departure first, if annotated, to attempt resolution.
- If a departure manifest has not been submitted by the agent, owner, operator, consignee of the vessel, the CBP port of arrival shall contact the agent of record to attempt resolution.
- If a departure manifest has not been submitted, the CBP seaport of entry shall initiate fines procedures.
- After six months, the documents shall be forwarded to the local Federal Records Center for maintenance and storage.

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In most cases, these fines are dismissed or mitigated. Local coordination can eliminate the unnecessary expenditure of time and resources for both CBP and Industry. This process would foster a positive spirit of partnership, as CBP officers balance their dual missions of safeguarding our borders and fostering international trade and travel.

Please inform your members of the procedural changes indicated in this letter. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Mr. Paul M. Morris, Executive Director, Admissibility and Passenger Programs, at (202) 344-2069.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Jacksta
Deputy Assistant Commissioner
Office of Field Operations