

Maritime On-Line – TRACS®

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

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Maritime On-Line – TRACS

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

1. Where can I find the list of U.S. port codes?

Answer: The list can be found in CBP’s CAMIR documentation (Appendix E) on its web site at www.cbp.gov. You can navigate to the port codes in one of two ways:

- a. Using the search option at the top of the CBP web site, search for CAMIR. From the results, select the following link:

[U.S. Bureau of Customs and Border Protection - Import](#)

[... AMS Interface Requirements \(CAMIR-Intermodal\) ... AMS Interface Requirements \(CAMIR\)](#)

U.S. port codes can be found under “Appendix E.”

- b. Go directly to the following web page and select “Appendix E”:
http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/trade/automated/automated_systems/ams/camir_intermodal/appendices/

2. Does the TRACS system also accommodate exports through the AES system?

Answer: No. We have not developed an AES interface, largely because we haven’t received any indication from our constituency that this is necessary – Customs provides a free on-line interface to AES. For more information on AES, visit <http://www.aesdirect.gov/>.

3. When a carrier submits a request to CBP to become automated through AMS, and lists the anticipated ports of call, what is the process for adding US discharge ports that are not initially defined in the letter? Does the carrier have to submit another letter to CBP to add additional ports or can the Maritime Exchange just add the ports to the list?

Answer: We have revised the Letter of Intent for carriers to request all AMS Direct Discharge Ports. All carriers that were set-up in TRACS prior to the LOI change, have been reset to all AMS Direct Discharge Ports.

4. When a carrier submits the request letter to become active on AMS that designates the Exchange as its service provider, does the carrier need to submit a letter to the Exchange detailing the various agents that have the authority to input manifest on our behalf?

Answer: Yes, we require that the carrier provide us with a written list of the steamship agents who are authorized to access the carrier’s data.

5. **When entering the manifest into the system and a port of discharge is not listed, what is the process for having that specific port added to my profile? Do you have a process for adding a port 24 hours per day?**

Answer: See #3 above. All carriers are now set for all AMS Direct Discharge Ports.

6. **If TRACS or AMS goes down is there a way to submit the manifest via fax to meet the requirement of inputting the manifest within 24 hours of arrival at a U.S. port?**

Answer: Yes. There are generally accepted practices to accommodate unscheduled down times by reverting to paper. These are outlined in the CBP Inbound Vessel Only – Trade Act of 2002 Final Rule FAQ (see #27 in the following link):
http://www.maritimedelriv.com/Ops/files/cbp_vessel_only_trade_act_faq_081108.doc

7. **Does the Exchange have a tutorial for inputting the data into AMS either within the program itself or as a separate training document? Is there a manual available for reference?**

Answer: Yes. TRACS has on-line help. Click the question mark in the top right corner on each screen for field explanations. A TRACS manual is currently being developed.

8. **I've entered the vessel's name, but it does not come up. What do I do?**

Answer: You may have typed the vessel's name incorrectly. Enter the first few letters and click the search magnifying glass.

For vessels/manifests already on the TRACS system, search for the manifest by using just the first few letters of the vessel. Or, use a wildcard search by surrounding a few letters of the vessel name with a percent sign (%). For example, %BAY% will return all instances of vessels with the letters "BAY" in the name.

If many instances of the same vessel are on the system, you can change your search option to vessel and voyage to limit the number of results.

If you are adding a new vessel, try entering only the first few letters of the vessel name to locate it. If your vessel is not listed, click the Manually Entered check box and enter the full name of the vessel. In this instance, type UNKNOWN in the Lloyd's Number field.

9. **The Last Foreign Port and/or Port of Loading field(s) does not accept the port I am trying to enter on the Bill of Lading Screen. What am I doing wrong?**

Answer: CBP does not have a port code for all foreign ports and sometimes uses an alternate spelling of the port. Try entering only the first few letters of the port name, or use a wildcard search by surrounding a few letters of the port name with a percent sign (%). For example, %BAY% will return all instances of port names with the letters "BAY" in the name.

Also, avoid beginning the port name with PORT or PUERTO. CBP may be using a different prefix. Since CBP does not have a port code for all ports, consider using the ALL OTHER option. (i.e. ALL OTHER PORTUGAL or ALL OTHER INDONESIA). When searching for ALL OTHER, you should first type ALL OTHER and the first letter of the port name (i.e. type ALL OTHER P to find All Other Portugal). If the search does not find All Other Portugal, again consider using a wildcard search such as *ORTUGA*.

10. What is the Place of Receipt?

The Place of Receipt is a free text field to type in the city or country where the carrier took possession of the cargo.

11. What does UNIT mean on the Bill of Lading Entry Screen?

Answer: According to CBP definitions, the Unit is the Smallest Exterior Packing Unit. The Unit field is free-form text and is limited to 5 characters, so you will need to abbreviate. The most commonly used abbreviations/units are: BOXES, BNDLS, BBLs, CTNS, SACKS and ROLLS. For oil shipments, CBP encourages the use of BBLs (barrels) in the Unit field.

12. What quantity do I use for bulk cargo?

Answer: If a bulk shipment arrives on one bill of lading, that bill of lading will be manifested as a quantity of one when one entry is presented to clear that bill of lading. If a bulk carrier is discharging at one location for the same consignee but the shipment is split by entering the cargo on three entries, the carrier must manifest a single bill of lading as three (3) (a quantity of one (1) for each entry) or create three bills of lading with a quantity of one (1) each. This equals a unit of one (1) for each entry. If a bulk carrier is discharging at one location for three different consignees, the carrier must transmit a total of three bills of lading at a quantity of one for each consignee. In summary, the manifest bill of lading must equal the entered quantity of One (1). It is essential for the broker and carrier to communicate in advance how the bulk cargo is to be entered on the CBP Form 3461. This will determine how the carrier needs to manifest the bulk cargo on the single or multiple bills of lading.

13. Do I have to re-key the addresses on the Shipper/Consignee/Notify screen for each bill?

Answer: No. When keying bills consecutively, click the blue copy buttons for each section to repeat the address from the previous bill. If all of the information on the screen is the same as the previous bill, click the “copy all” button. If you exit from the manifest and return at a later time to finish, you will need to key the Shipper/Consignee/Notify information on one new bill before being able to use the copy functions again.

14. Can I move bills to a different port or manifest without having to re-key them?

Answer: Yes. You can move some or all bills from one port to another.

To move all bills to another port: From the Manifest Lookup screen, select the port from which you want to move the bills. Click the Port button and select the Change option – you will be presented with four options to move the bills.

To move only some bills: First create the port if it does not already exist on the Add/Edit View screen by selecting Port, then Add Port. After saving the new port, click View Bills and from the Bill of Lading Lookup screen, select the bill(s) you wish to move. Click the B/L Tasks button, select the Move Bill to Another Port option. You will be presented with two options to move your bill(s).

15. Can I change a bill of lading number?

Answer: If the manifest has not been submitted to CBP, you can change the bill number on the bill of lading entry screen. If the manifest has been submitted to CBP, you cannot directly change the bill number. You will need to copy the bill of lading to a new bill with the new number, and then delete the old bill.

- From the Bill of Lading Lookup screen, highlight the bill you wish to change, click B/L Tasks from the toolbar above, and select the “new bill from existing bill” option. This will completely copy the bill you had highlighted and allow you to key in a different bill number.
- When you save the bill you will be prompted for an amendment code – enter 03 as the code.
- Go back to the bill of lading lookup screen and select the original bill. Click B/L Tasks, and select the “delete bill” option. This process will delete the bill you needed to change and add the bill with the correct bill number.

16. Can I email a manifest and/or status message?

Answer: Yes. On the main tool bar, select Reports. Choose the report you wish to send. Enter the vessel name, voyage number and/or B/L number and click the “preview” button. Once the information has loaded onto the screen, click the save icon at the top of the screen and save the file to your PC. You can now send the file as an attachment to an email from your system.

17. When a manifest is printed, the field for the Master’s name is left out? Is there a way to enter the Master’s name on the manifest?

Answer: This field has been added to the TRACS program for printing purposes only. It is not transmitted to CBP as it is not a CBP requirement.

18. When submitting a vessel departure time from a foreign port, what time zone should I use?

Answer: CBP has indicated that you should use Eastern Standard Time (EST).

19. Can I move the cargo after it is unloaded from the ship if I do not have a release message?

Answer: No. You must have an AMS release in TRACS prior to moving the cargo. Even if you receive a release message and the cargo is subsequently placed on Hold, you must wait until the Hold is removed in AMS before moving the cargo.

20. Who can I contact at CBP if I have a problem?

Answer: You may contact the CBP Client Representatives assigned to the Maritime Exchange. Their contact information is as follows:

Jim Stahl, Anne Keller or Eileen Johnson
Phone: 215-717-5908
Fax: 215-597-9929

If you cannot contact any of the above, you may also call your local port client representatives for assistance. For CBP port contact information, please visit the following web page: <http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/toolbox/contacts/ports/>.

21. Can I make an amendment to a bill of lading that is not exempt from the 24-hour pre-lading rule?

Answer: Yes. However, if you make an amendment to a bill prior to the vessel sailing the foreign port, the 24-hour clock will start over again for that bill from the time CBP accepts the amendment.

22. If the cargo is exempt from the 24 Hour Pre-lading Rule, when must I submit the manifest?

Answer: If the cargo is exempt from the 24 Hour Pre-lading Rule, the manifest should be filed as soon as possible after the vessel sails, but must be filed 24 hours before arrival in the U.S.

If the transit time between the foreign port and U.S. arrival is less than 24 hours, the manifest should be transmitted as soon as possible after sailing. In this case, you will not receive any release messages until you transmit the Actual Arrival date and time to AMS.

23. What is the “On Hold” button?

Answer: If the “On Hold” button is checked, it means that any changes made to the manifest will not be transmitted until the On Hold flag is removed. Manifests that are downloaded from CBP to the Maritime Exchange are automatically placed “On Hold.”

The Maritime Exchange is not permitted to allow edits to these manifests unless CBP provides authorization.

24. When I make an amendment (change) to a bill of lading, when will it transmit to CBP?

Answer: When an amendment is made, it will automatically transmit to CBP after you exit the manifest. At this time the bill goes into a Pending (“P”) status, until such time as we receive a response from CBP on that particular bill. You will not be able to make any additional changes to the bill until we receive a response from CBP and the bill is no longer in a Pending status (i.e. the bill is either in an Accepted or Rejected status).

25. What kind of entries are not recognized in AMS?

Answer: Foreign Trade Zone and other informal entries. These types of entries must be entered by the Customhouse Broker into AMS.

26. How do I manifest Foreign Remaining on Board (FROB) cargo?

Answer: On the Bill of Lading Entry screen, change the Bill Status from 0 to B. The B signifies to CBP that the cargo is FROB. When CBP receives the bill, they will automatically close the bill in AMS. You will not get a release message.

27. If a mistake was made on the Estimated Date of Arrival/Actual Date of Arrival, can I change it?

Answer: CBP does not allow any part of the Actual Date of Arrival (ADA) to be changed once submitted. If the actual arrival date was submitted incorrectly, contact your local client representative to notify him/her of the error. We do allow you to retransmit the date, but only do so if CBP did not receive the information the first time. As of May 8, 2006, CBP allows a change to the Estimated Date of Arrival (EDA). The date of the existing EDA cannot be within 5 days of the current EDA date and the new EDA must be 5 days greater than the current EDA date.

28. If my Mode of Transportation is 10=Breakbulk, can I add containerized cargo to the manifest?

Answer: Yes. Simply fill in the container number, seal, quantity, description and marks and numbers on the cargo entry screen and save.

29. Can I attach multiple containers to one bill of lading?

Answer: Yes. After you enter your first container and save it, click the New button at the top left corner to enter the next container, save and either close or continue to enter additional containers.

30. Is necessary to manifest SLOPS/SLUDGE?

Answer: Yes. SLOPS which are washings from oil tanks, usually mixed oil cargo washings mixed with water or chemicals, for discharge at terminals for filtering and SLUDGE which is waste from the vessel engine should be manifested.

31. What is a Permit to Transfer and how do I request it from CBP?

Answer: The Permit to Transfer feature allows the carrier/agent to request authorization from CBP to transfer the cargo to a bonded facility. This can be done through TRACS as follows:

- a. Under the Bill of Lading pull down menu on the main TRACS screen, select Permit to Transfer
- b. Look up the vessel
- c. Check the bill that you are requesting the Permit To Transfer on the right side
- d. Click the tab at the top – Enter the PTT Specific Information
- e. If containerized, click Issue PTT for All Containers or check each container to the right of the grid
- f. Enter the FIRMS Code – the FIRMS code is the 4 character code of the bonded facility. You can do a lookup on the code by entering the first letter/number of the code. If you cannot find the code you need, contact the Operations staff at ops@mxops.org and we will enter the code for you.
- g. Enter the Bonded Carrier ID/IRS #. The carrier should have this number. It is issued by the IRS and should be a Type 2 Custodial bond for Permits to Transfer. If you cannot get a valid bond number, you may also use the Importer Record Number, which is issued by CBP and can usually be found on CF 301, in the middle of the page, right side. You can only use this number if the FIRMS facility is bonded with a Type 4 bond. The Importer Record # should be in the following format (XX-XXXXXXX00).
- h. Additional Remarks are optional.
- i. Save.
- j. Check the status of the bill of lading to confirm the Permit to Transfer has been authorized. If the bond number/importer record is invalid, the Permit to Transfer will be denied.
- k. If a PTT has already been authorized, and the ship is diverted to another port, CBP will automatically cancel the PTT when the bill is amended to change the port.

32. How do I delete a Permit To Transfer (PTT) submitted through TRACS?

Answer: You must contact the CBP Client Representative to manually delete a PTT.

33. How do I submit a manifest if I am a Non-vessel Operating Common Carrier (NVOCC)?

Answer: MVOCC = Master Vessel Operating Common Carrier
NVOCC = Non-Vessel Operating Common Carrier

NVOCCs have 3 additional mandatory requirements which are found on the B/L Entry screen:

- a. SNP Code (1) must = the MVOCC's SCAC
- b. Shipment Code must = OB
- c. Reference # must = MVOCC's master bill number (including the MVOCC SCAC)

In addition to the 3 mandatory items above, the Status Indicator must = N

MVOCCs that have an association with a NVOCC bill must indicate by selecting "M" in the Status Indicator in the master bill. They have the option to reference the NVOCC bill number in Reference Number, but it is not mandatory. Note: if the MVOCC does not have an association with an NVOCC, the status indicator should be "0" which is the TRACS default setting for this field.

When CBP receives bill from a NVOCC, it will look for a match with the MVOCC master bill number. When the systems makes the match, a disposition code of "1Y" will be received in the status of the NVOCC bill indicating the match was made. When the "1Y" is received, the NVOCC bill is closed on AMS, and TRACS will mark the bill as "Closed" on the Bill of Lading Lookup grid. All the release and other status messages will post to the master bill or MVOCC bill.

34. Who do I contact at CBP if cargo was released with a 1C and subsequently put on a CBP Hold after it was discharged?

Answer: Local to the Delaware River Port contact: Chief of Targeting Unit and Vessel Central Supervisor, 215-717-5835.

Other Ports contact: Supervisor CBP Officer or Fines, Penalties, Forfeitures Officer in the petition for mitigation.

35. My cargo was originally destined for the US, but orders changed to offload the cargo at the US port and to be loaded on another vessel to go back foreign. How do I handle this?

Answer: You will need to make sure that the entry filed on the cargo is a type 63 (IE – Immediate Movement Exportation). If the consignee information has changed, then you will need to amend the bill reflecting the change.

36. How can I split a bill of lading?

Answer: On the Bill of Lading Entry screen, select OL as a Shipment Code and reference the original bill of lading number (including SCAC code) in the block marked Reference Number. Please see the CBP FAQ for more information on splitting of bills pertaining to the 24-hour rule.

37. How do I manifest empty containers?

Answer: On the Bill of Lading entry screen, select “2” Empty Equipment as the Status Indicator. On the cargo screen, select “E” for Container Status.

38. Does Cargo that is loaded in US, goes foreign, comes back to the US have to be manifested?

Answer: If cargo is loaded in the US, goes foreign, then comes back to the US with the same cargo originally loaded in the US and is on the same vessel and will discharge in the US, you must transmit information for the shipment. You will be required to clear the shipment at the U.S. port of arrival. CBP advises to include in the cargo description field the fact that this is return cargo, loaded in the US and include the US port name. Also include the reason the cargo will be discharged in the U.S. instead of the foreign port. Use the last foreign port the vessel was at prior to entering the US for the load port (since AMS will not allow you to enter a U.S. port). Please make sure that you notify CBP in the port of discharge.

If the cargo is loaded in the US, goes foreign, then come back to the US and will not discharge in the US and will go foreign again, the bill of lading should be filed as a Foreign Remaining on Board (FROB) bill with the same instructions as above for the load port and cargo description.

If there are any questions, CBP in the port of discharge may contact Leslie Bianchi, Vessel Program Manager, DHS:CBP:OFO:CCS:Manifest and Conveyance Branch, Email: Manifest.Branch@dhs.gov.

39. What load port should be used for fish transloaded at sea in foreign water?

Answer: Use last foreign port the vessel was at as the load port. More information about fishing vessels is available on the CBP Trade Act of 2002 Final Rule FAQ.

40. If, entry was filed on my bill, why don't I see it released in TRACS?

Answer: There are several reasons why the release may not be showing in TRACS, here are two of the most common reasons:

- a. If a mistake was made on the entry (e.g. wrong bill number, wrong discharge port), CBP may not have been able to match the entry to your bill. You can find this type of problem in the Shell Records under Reports in TRACS. A correction will have to be made to either the bill of lading or the entry.
- b. If the bill was submitted or amended within 24 hours of the Estimated Date of Arrival, CBP will hold back release and hold removals until the actual arrival date is submitted through AMS. Make sure you post the arrival date in a timely manner.

41. Should a manifest be filed if the vessel is foreign to St. Croix or other US Virgin Islands?

Answer: No, US Virgin Islands are not AMS capable.

42. Should a manifest be filed if the vessel is departing St. Croix or other US Virgin Islands and arriving in a US port?

Answer: Yes, a manifest must be filed in AMS for vessels departing the US Virgin Islands destined to a US port.

43. What is the Foreign Port Code 99900 High Seas used for?

Answer: The Schedule K Foreign Port Code 99900 High Seas is a port code used for off-shore tanker transshipment points outside of US territorial waters.

44. Where can I find the US Harmonized Tariff Schedule?

Answer: The following link is a chapter by chapter listing of the Harmonized Tariff Schedule: <http://www.usitc.gov/tata/hts/bychapter/index.htm>.

45. Can I enter multiple HTS numbers for the cargo description?

Answer: If a single cargo has multiple HTS numbers associated with it, they can all be listed on the Harmonized Code screen. You do not have to click back and forth from cargo to harmonized number. You can enter all of the codes at the same time, by using the New key. If you have duplicate HTS numbers for the cargo, you only have to list it once on the Harmonized Code screen. If the cargo is containerized, you should enter the HTS numbers for each container (even if they are duplicates from a different container).

46. If a vessel has to make an emergency stop at a US Port for repairs and no cargo is discharging, does the port for the emergency stop have to be manifested?

Answer: No, if the vessels makes an unscheduled stop at a US port and will not discharge cargo, it does not have to be manifested. Only the US port with discharge cargo should be manifested.

47. Does CBP require the vessel arrival to be submitted within a certain timeframe?

Answer: CBP does not have a specific timeframe for vessel arrivals to be completed in AMS. However, they do instruct for the vessel arrival to completed in a “timely” manner.

48. Are NVOCCs required to submit foreign vessel departure dates/times and US vessel arrival dates/times?

Answer: CBP does not require foreign vessel departures or US vessel arrivals in AMS for NVOCCs.

49. If I did not receive an “ISF on File” message and do not have a “Do Not Load” message, can I load the cargo?

Answer: Yes. The carrier is not responsible to make sure the ISF is filed. As long as there is not a “Do Not Load” message, the cargo can be loaded. Any ISF issues will be handled by CBP upon arrival at the discharge port.