

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to specify the procedures to be followed by importing trade community members who want to automate their entry processing.

The Automated Broker Interface (ABI) of the Automated Commercial System (ACS) permits trade participants to interface directly with the U.S. Customs Service Data Center in order to transmit entry data on imported merchandise.

This document provides the basic technical specifications and record formatting rules needed for participation in ABI of ACS.

The U.S. Customs Service, trade community, and other U.S. Government agencies benefit from ACS.

- It allows Customs to collect more complete and accurate data, thus providing more control over merchandise entering the United States.
- Statistical data is quickly compiled and disseminated to other U.S. Government agencies including the Bureau of the Census, the Department of Transportation, the Federal Communications Commission, the Food and Drug Administration, and the Fish and Wildlife Service.
- An entry filer can submit entry/entry summary data electronically through ACS. Based on the data provided, Customs verifies the accuracy of the duties/taxes/fees calculated by the filer. If the entry/entry summary data is incorrect or if certain data is missing, the user is then able to correct it electronically. ACS speeds up the entry processing, thus

permitting merchandise to be released earlier.

- ACS permits statement processing which allows filers to pay multiple ABI entry summaries with one check or payment transaction. Statement filers can participate in the Automated Clearinghouse (ACH) which allows electronic payment of Customs fees, duties, and taxes.
- Since ACS provides two-way communication between the user and Customs, the entry filer is able to query various automated reference files.

Users are responsible for developing or acquiring the software necessary to support the functional aspects of ACS, including the preparation and printing of required forms (Customs Forms 3461, Entry, and 7501, Entry Summary). It is an interface requirement that participants' systems must contain complete edits and verification logic to ensure data accuracy and completeness. The system must also contain a complete tariff number database. The data is then extracted and formatted according to the specifications contained in this document and transmitted to the Customs Data Center.

Costs for communications hardware adapters and supporting software are absorbed by the respective participant. Customs provides access to toll-free lines for actual data transmission.

Refer to the Getting Started chapter of this document for information on the format and structure of this document. The record layouts and narrative description of the records are

combined in this document for quick and easy reference.

As new functions or modifications are added to ABI/ACS, procedures will be incorporated into this document.

Note: ACS is an entry validation and monitoring system. *It is not an entry preparation system.* While ACS provides users with meaningful edit and query capabilities, accurate entry preparation is ultimately the responsibility of the entry filer.

This document specifies basic individual data element requirements (mandatory, conditional, and optional), data and record formatting rules, and in some cases, provides tables and files of possible data values and parameters. *It is not intended to replace entry rules* for the Customs Forms 7501 or 3461, which are documented elsewhere. Also, no attempt is made to document all of the possible data verification procedures. For example, an entry transmitted to Customs containing a date of export later than the date of import will result in an error message. While some of these error conditions are listed in Appendix G to this document, most are not, since routine, obvious errors should be detected by the user's entry preparation system and should never be transmitted to Customs.