

Priority Processing

Priority processing is a code within the Job Control Language (JCL) that allows the Automated Commercial System (ACS) to sort a client's input based on the need to process a client's data efficiently. The success of this feature depends on the conscientious and reasonable use of the priority classes defined below. The intent is to select transactions for ACS to perform in those cases where ACS is backlogged. The U.S. Customs Service encourages all clients to participate in priority processing.

Incoming data is classified into four categories:

- **SIS:** Input needed to release land border cargo within one hour.
- **CAR:** Input needed to release cargo today.
- **DIS:** Input based on client needs.
- **OFF:** Regular priority.

SIS: SIS input requires very quick turnaround by the nature of the data. This data is given the highest priority possible. This class is intended to contain transactions that are needed for the release of land border cargo where the release is expected to occur within the next hour. This class of transactions may be determined by different application codes in the near future.

CAR: CAR priority is defined by the need to release cargo for transactions that do not fit the SIS guidelines. It is impossible to limit this to a given type of transaction (e.g., cargo release). Instead, this class of input is intended

for transactions needed to release cargo no later than the current business day. Estimated date of arrival should be used for cargo release and entry summary transactions to determine whether they fall into this category. All other transactions related to an entry or entry summary within this block (e.g., Customs Form (CF) 5106 updates, harmonized queries, entry queries) must be included in this block.

DIS: DIS priority transactions are those deemed urgent by the clients that do not fall into the SIS or CAR guidelines. Again, all other transactions related to an entry or entry summary within this block must also be included in this block.

OFF: OFF, or regular, priority includes all other transactions. All data, regardless of priority classification, is given priority within ACS. When ACS is backlogged, the benefits of this feature can be fully realized.

Clients need to make changes in their computer system to use this feature. First is the issue of identifying and segregating those transactions based on the guidelines above. Once the work has been classified, the client's computer system must include a new control statement in the JCL before the transactions are included in any given class. Please note that each set of A-Z blocks within each *P* block must run independently of other *P* blocks. The system is capable of running each *P* block in parallel. In other words, do not put a CF-5106 update in a *CAR* block that belongs with an entry summary in a *DIS* block. All transactions for a given entry must be in the same *P* block.

The following rules are used for the control statement.

- Code ++PRIORITY XXX starts in column 1. The XXX represents the level of priority requested. Set XXX to the type of data being submitted as shown below:

Code Description

SIS	Used for input needed to release land border cargo within one hour.
CAR	Used for input needed to release cargo today.
DIS	Used for input based on client needs.
OFF	Used for the rest of the regular transactions.

- The placement of the control statements is:

++PRIORITY SIS

A control statement
B control statement
SIS transactions
Y control statement
Z control statement

A control statement
B control statement
Possibly other SIS transactions
Y control statement
Z control statement

++PRIORITY CAR

A control statement
B control statement
Transactions related to release of cargo
Y control statement
Z control statement

A control statement
B control statement
Other transactions related to release of cargo
Y control statement
Z control statement

++PRIORITY DIS

A control statement
B control statement
Transactions deemed high priority by the client
Y control statement
Z control statement

A control statement
B control statement
Other transactions deemed high priority
Y control statement
Z control statement

++PRIORITY OFF

Any A-Z sets required to submit regular priority transactions.

- Do not transmit a ++PRIORITY record if there are no transactions of that type. The system defaults to ++PRIORITY OFF priority if any blocks are sent in without a ++PRIORITY record occurring before the first A Record. The transaction blocks should be submitted in the order shown above.
- There is no need to separate the transactions by transmitting different jobs for each set or by signing on and off to transmit each set. Customs is implementing enhancements to ACS that make the meaning of *job* less important. Multiple jobs simply add to system overhead and defeat the purpose of electronic entry filing.