



Ottawa, July 20, 2015

Customs Notice 15-026

Arctic Shipping Electronic Commercial Clearances Program

1. The purpose of this notice is to provide a risk-based, alternative approach for clearing commercial cargo and conveyances, in the marine mode, for certain vessels destined to the Arctic. The Arctic Shipping Electronic Commercial Clearances Program (ASECC) is a pilot program now underway for the 2015 Arctic shipping season.
2. Carriers, regardless of where they arrive in Canada, whether near a Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) Commercial Vessel port (C/VESS) or not, are required by CBSA regulations to report all cargo and conveyances to the CBSA.
3. Marine carriers transporting cargo to Canada, with few exceptions, are currently required to transmit Advance Commercial Information (ACI) for cargo and conveyances to the CBSA prior to arrival in Canada. Additionally, with the coming into force of the reporting regulations amendments in May 2015, marine carriers are also required to electronically transmit the Conveyance Arrival Certification Message (CACM) upon arrival in Canada.
4. Currently, CBSA regional offices may require a vessel to divert to the nearest designated customs office, or may make arrangements with carriers to clear marine vessels and cargo while they are anchored at sea, on a special service or cost recovery basis.
5. An alternative reporting approach in the Arctic alleviates issues identified in current processes:
 - (a) Substantial costs to the carrier of a long distance diversion to a C/VESS port.
 - (b) Minimize unnecessary risks to CBSA officers by providing an alternate process to that which requires them to examine Arctic vessels in uncontrolled and/or dangerous environments.
 - (c) Lack of resources and facilities in the Arctic often means limited ability to conduct exams.
 - (d) Eliminates the risk of clearing vessels through fax or emailed documents after a vessel has arrived in the Arctic, without sufficient advance notice for a thorough risk assessment.
6. Process for ASECC application:
 - (a) Carrier must provide an application to the “host region” (region of report) with a cc to the National Targeting Centre (NTC) detailing carrier information and the rationale for the request to participate in the program.
 - (b) Carrier must provide the pre-arrival notification and Crew List 7 days prior to the vessel’s departure from the foreign port to the NTC with a cc to the host region.
 - (c) ACI and remainder of the Inward Report Package must be submitted within regulated timeframes.
 - (d) Carriers must have a solid history of compliance with CBSA policy and regulations.

(e) Eligibility includes vessels only carrying non-OGD shipments, i.e. shipments that do not require permits or Canadian Food Inspection Agency inspection.

(f) Carrier must demonstrate that vessel routing would make it impractical/cost prohibitive for the vessel to arrive at a designated C/VESS port.

7. Regardless of eligibility, the CBSA will always maintain the right to require an Arctic bound vessel to report to a designated C/VESS port for examination, or on behalf of our OGD partners.

8. All carriers requesting ASECC alternate processing will be required, wherever possible, to use electronic ACI to submit their pre-arrival data and arrival message.

9. Carriers coming to Canada in-ballast do have the option, at this time, of transmitting their advance commercial information electronically to CBSA. If a carrier chooses this option, they must also report their arrival electronically by sending the CACM.

10. The CBSA strongly recommends that marine carriers hold a bonded carrier code for alternate processing, as a bond is required any time unreleased goods move beyond the first port of arrival (FPOA).

11. Through CBSA Compliance Program initiatives, administrative monetary penalties and through the leveraging of OGDs such as the Canadian Coast Guard, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Department of National Defence and Transport Canada, the CBSA will ensure vessels destined for Arctic ports are compliant with CBSA alternate processing directives.

12. Inquiries related to this notice may be directed to:

Canada Border Services Agency:

Quebec Region: 201BLDOU04G@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca, Fax: 418-648-4625

Northern Ontario Region: Nunavut_Clearance@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca, Fax: 613-991-6912

Atlantic Region: NP12REXC.01G@cbsa-asfc.gc.ca, Fax: 902-426-2129